

## Combat Sports and Revolution: A Report Back from Fight Weekend in North Carolina

*November 24, 2024*

A report from North Carolina on a recent gathering benefiting anarchist political prisoner Michael Kimble featuring combat sports.

Through the weekend of October 18th-20th, the triangle-area of North Carolina hosted a series of events to bring combat sports and revolutionary politics together. This weekend was put together by a handful of comrades and friends who have been training, fighting, and coaching together, some of us for more than a decade.



Our intention with this weekend was to nurture the culture of martial arts and combat sports training in North America, which is generally far, far behind European and Latin American anarchists' building of this tradition. Over the years we've been inspired by [anarchist smokers in Philly](#),

Oakland, Montreal, and Mexico City, etc. The disparate nature of radical martial artists organizing in the margins of our cities often leaves us feeling disconnected. In an effort to feel less alone in our commitment to training combat sports, Fight Weekend was a long-overdue celebration of how far we've come and what is possible.



Among often unfriendly political communities increasing in convoluted social allegiances and intellectual abstractions, we want to be in our bodies first and foremost. We believe that physically training together among our varying experiences and capacities offers us something that other, often culturally and racially segregated silos of dance parties, punk shows, or activist events do not. This is not just for the relevance of the skills themselves, but the opportunities for trust-building under stress, and vulnerability through play. We have experienced firsthand how this kind of togetherness is a hugely gratifying and applicable practice, helping to shake off some of the "beautiful loser" mentality that troubles our communities as we fight against the daily horrors this world offers us.

## THE WEEKEND

The weekend began on Friday with a Welcome Cookout as people trickled in to town. A huge amount of food was brought, largely thanks to the support of local folks helping to run a nearby mutual aid disaster warehouse, who were pulling double duty between running a supply warehouse for western NC hurricane relief and helping with the weekend of events. A big projector screen was set up and played fight footage of various rad fighters, as well as a sweet tribute video to a local anarchist pro-MMA fighter who recently retired. We gave out programs with the weekend schedule, and had a small letter-writing station where participants could sign a group card to [Alabama prison rebel Michael Kimble](#), for whom the fight night itself was a fundraiser.



We also had impromptu "face-offs" between people who were scheduled to fight each other the following night. These were beautiful and hilarious, as people from different towns walked around the cookout finding their opponents. Following the

around the cookout finding their opponents. Following the suggestion of a Philly comrade, next time we want to hype the spectacle of these face-offs even more. A comradely and over-the-top, campy spectacle!

The next day was kicked off with a group self-defense workshop at a nearby gym led by local pro-fighter D'juan Owens. After a series of individual drills we practiced as a large crowd intervening in various situations where an attacker was grabbing or holding/choking one of our own. Highly relevant!



A few hours later, our Fight Night fundraiser kicked off at [Raleigh United Mutual Aid Hub](#) in downtown Raleigh. Adorned with banners and lights, about 20' by 20' of mat space, and a big table of zines and t-shirts that Michael Kimble helped design, around 140-150 people filled the space through the night. There were twelve matches - six jiu jitsu, four muay-thai, and two boxing - and they were amazing! The crowd was screaming, bodies were falling all over, people went fucking HARD.

When matching people for their fights, we asked fighters to respond with their stats: age, general walking weight, and experience level. We also asked their thoughts on potential opponents based on their gendered experiences and on gender affirming hormone therapy. We received a range of responses, allowing every fighter to self-determine what was and wasn't important to them to help make a fight they felt comfortable taking. This was as important to us as was letting the fighters know they are welcome however and whoever they are. We take huge pride in how a lot of the matches that night were an absolute gender-fuck-you to the entirely ridiculous combat sports industry.



Halfway through we had an intermission and played a 9 minute interview with Michael to give a background on his case and his organizing behind bars. He also managed to call one of us immediately beforehand, so in addition to playing his recorded interview, we were able to have some loud group chants into the phone for his benefit. It is an ongoing and sometimes difficult task to bring our revolutionary ancestors, elders, and prisoners into the political spaces we create, but Michael felt present, and his words set a really beautiful tone for the rest of the night.

After the fights officially finished with a final bout of beautifully technical muay-thai violence, people shared hugs and dancing before we took a big group pic for Michael. The crowd started to dissipate, some to an after-party, others to help break down the space. We ended up raising over 3k for his post-release fund!



The weekend officially finished with an open mat and group conversation at a local gym the following morning. People who had been frantically trying to punch and choke each other in front of a rowdy crowd the night before got to hang more casually, doing padwork or having light sparring or grappling rounds, asking each other technical questions, problem-solving certain positions, or just stretching and decompressing from the night before.

We closed out open mat with an

hour-long facilitated group conversation spanning different themes related to how training has affected people's political practice and the movements and projects we are a part of. This was the only formally planned conversational space of the weekend, and it was intentionally limited to those who actively train in combat sports.



The range of insights and “Holy shit, yes, that is what I’ve been trying to find the words for!” moments during that convo are too numerous to mention. But of note, people discussed how our training has been crucial to work through trauma endured in street fights with fascists and cops, how it has worked to build trust in the decision-making instincts of our affinity groups, how it grounds our perspective on what kinds of interpersonal conflict are “worth it” vs. what kinds can be set aside, how martial arts can be a vehicle for inviting in new people that would normally be alienated or turned off by activist subcultural bullshit, and how coaching has in turn made us better at teaching other kinds of skills and ideas. It was a beautiful privilege to have a weekend where we could approach some of these questions with others who share the passion for and experiences of fighting.

## IN CLOSING

First and foremost, we owe a huge thanks to the many people (Em, you were incredible!) who stepped into last minute roles for this weekend, to help with everything from housing to sound, tabling, door, reffing, and MCing at Fight Night. Impromptu ring babes pulled it all together with fiery, sexy outfits and hand-made round cards. And obviously, huge shout out to everyone who traveled to town to take part and compete. Extra appreciation for all the people who



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Nov 1

SHIT NOONE SAYS OUT LOUD: No matter who wins your presidential election, the people in POVERTY, PRISONS, and JAILS will be fighting the SAME fights #burntheprisons

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helped out even as they were responding to the disaster in western NC.



As enthusiasm continues to grow for combat sports in radical political communities, there will be ample models to choose from on how to move forward and organize these spaces. At our fight night, there were fighters who train strictly at autonomous, “political” gyms, others like us who coach and train at primarily normal “apolitical” gyms, and others who are able to combine the two. The shared wisdom seems to be that there are pros and cons to both, with the former being more affordable and offering a higher degree of political and social intimacy, and the latter more consistency and a higher level of instruction. Regardless, we encourage people to test themselves. If you can, compete at least once or twice in order to be honest with yourself. Don’t wait until a street fight with fascists goes awry to learn that you have absolutely no idea how to escape a basic RNC.



For our part, we tried to adopt certain lessons we’ve learned from attending and fighting at sanctioned fight events over the last ten years, in terms of matchmaking and how to smoothly run an event, while dispensing with other aspects that clashed with our values or seemed a bad fit for a revolutionary (and non-sanctioned) card.

Ultimately, this was really an open

experiment for us, and we think it worked amazingly well. If you’re interested in putting on something similar but have questions, hit us up at [fightweekend@protonmail.com](mailto:fightweekend@protonmail.com)!

No pasarán,  
fight weekend crew

## Don't Just Do Nothing: 20 Things You Can Do to Counter Fascism

November 21, 2024

**Jewish anarchists weigh-in on how people can organize and act in the changing terrain. For a zine PDF, [go here](#).**

*You are not obligated to complete the work, but neither are you free to desist from it. —Pirkei Avot (2:21)*

As Christofascism takes the reins of US power, thereby impacting the whole of this continent and the globe, it should be abundantly clear at this point that appealing to the state—any state—is a losing strategy. The world had already lost when the “choice” this November was between two versions of fascism.

We offer up this sampler of ideas, encouraging you to think and act for yourselves, with each other, as precisely the only winning strategy. If each idea here seems not enough on its own—well, it isn’t.

The Pirkei Avot quote, perhaps the most widely known and cited teaching from Jewish text, was penned some two thousand years ago. So many forms of despotism—empires, monarchies, and states—have risen and fallen in that time. We are not alone, as anarchists and Jews, in our ethical imperative to wrestle with every type of authority.

Ancestors throughout human history—people of all colors, genders, and cultures of this earth—have struggled together to resist the imposition of coercive, hierarchical violence. Crucially, people have autonomously

organized, defended, and practiced myriad forms of mutual aid, collective care, and self-governance for millennia—what is often called “prefigurative politics.” They haven’t put off the worlds they want to see but instead have directly acted as if they were already free.

As diasporic rebels, our Jewishness teaches us to rely on solidarity beyond all borders. Our teachings compel us to lean on the community of others to live lives worth living, whether we are mourning or celebrating, or grappling time and again with what liberation should and could look like. When we start Shabbat each week—twenty-five hours of practicing “the world to come”—and end it with Havdalah—when we ease ourselves back into this brutal “world as it is”—we do so with braided offerings (bread and a candle, respectively). Such braids, in these times, underscore the imperative for interwovenness, for interrelationality, between each and every one of us, from all walks of life, who want to destroy fascism and bring about liberatory social transformations.

May all freedom-seeking peoples journey side by side toward those aspirations by better loving and caring for each other.

Here are twenty things you can do to counter fascism—yes, you! yes, now! Dream up and put into motion many, many more things too. This is only a beginning.

1. Do *doikayt* (hereness) within your one-on-one relationships. What would it look like to check in with each of your beloveds based on your current conditions and communicate with love to each other what you envision for the world you want to build? Identify the soil amendments necessary in thought, word, and deed for those seeds to flourish.

2. Make people soup and do not stop inviting them over for soup! Be a reason for living.

3. Build a support network. Join with like-minded people and organize for quality over quantity; a few devoted comrades can go



further than a large and dispassionate group. Make art about it. Your support network, the love of your friends and family, can always be broader; build it bigger, with care and intentionality. Make more art about it. Try out new actions: talk to people and ask how they're feeling, distribute literature, organize a study group, or put up stickers or disperse seed bombs together. With every loving bond we forge, and all the new art we make, we divorce ourselves a little more from the demons that haunt us — hopelessness, irony, and complacency — and find sparks of possibility. Try, fail, and try again and again.

4. Buy, accumulate, or otherwise procure Plan B, and save it for yourself and others in case it's needed later. Set up a Plan B distro in your community. Do the same with other, potentially soon-hard-to-access supplies related to bodily autonomy.

5. Write letters to people in prison and detention, send them books, and/or do jail support and solidarity for those facing state repression in your communities. Act in ways that thwart carceral logics in your responses to conflict and harm as well as your day-to-day relations with others. Remember, there are no prisons or cops in olam ha-ba (the world to come).

6. Make art and display it in public. Draw, paint, or write a colorful sign about your dreams, your hopes for a better world, or to celebrate something that you love about this one. It doesn't matter if you don't think of yourself as an artsy type. If you can, get together with others to do this; share art materials, space, and ideas. Wheat paste (or wallpaper paste or glue) your finished work in public—somewhere you and others will see it when going about your daily lives. You've now made a material change to your surroundings. It will make people smile. It will make people feel less alone. It will make visible your resistance as well as visions. It also won't last forever. Nothing does. You can always make more.

7. Take concrete steps to build relationships beyond borders and

strengthen global solidarity with those who share your values. Here are a few starting points. Learn a new language and schedule mutual practice sessions with others studying your language; such skills will likely also prove useful to aid those at increased threat of being targeted. Reach out to other people (or collectives, projects, etc.) in other parts of the world who you share affinity with—Jews and Muslims, dispossessed and displaced people, anarchists and queers, and so on—and see if there's anything you can collaborate on. Seek out the stories of people who fought or fled authoritarian regimes in the past and present; learn from their experiences, and engage in discussions about our current challenges and a diversity of tactics to address them.

8. Learn new skills, share them, and help others learn new skills toward everything we need and desire — everything for everyone, and what's more for free. Learn to be a medic, facilitator, birth and death doula, electrician, filmmaker, mediator, writer, researcher to dig up information for your local antifascist crews, and on and on. Learn how to stop bleeds, plant gardens, squat and/or build houses, purify water, craft zines, sew clothing, repair cars, use a chain saw, make composting toilets, or cook for crowds. Learn how to aid folks in finding refuge, calming their nervous systems, setting up digital security, getting hormones, and so much more.

9. Feel your emotions. Do not sublimate them. Feel them and remember that this connects us to everyone who has ever despaired. Feel them with others. Set up peer support networks, a weekend-long emotional care clinic or daylong emotional aid skills share, or something as simple as social spaces where you can find others, sip herbal tea, and reciprocally warm each others' hearts, even if temporarily.

10. Learn about and begin to practice alternative decision-making structures and group processes that have served those who got shit done in the past. Practice good processes that are cut from the cloth that the Zapatistas refer to as buen gobierno

(good governance, or self-governance). Learn about Zapatista autonomous communities, Chéran, Rojava, and many other examples of self-governance, past and present, as inspiration as well as horizons to work toward.

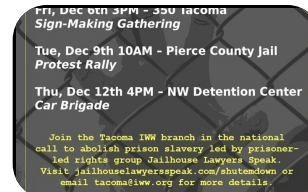


[Download Zine PDF](#)

11. Gather and distribute free N95/KN95 masks and COVID tests as a baseline toward building a more generalized harm reduction crew that can gather and distribute, for example, Naloxone, fentanyl test strips, clean needles, condoms, and lube. Normalize COVID, other health protections, and additional ways of taking reciprocal care of each other. Go to outdoor events (or mask up for indoor ones) to table and share pamphlets on collective COVID safety and harm reduction.

12. We have a long history of fighting fascism, states, and policing, including as embodied in a rich tradition of anti-authoritarian Jewish songs. Sing "Daloy Politsey/Polizei" (down with the police) at your next prison noise demo or Palestinian solidarity action. Start a study group and find inspiration in those stories—and then act on them. Join in fascist watches and cop watches, or start them in your neighborhood or city. Prepare forward for community self-defense, which can come in many shapes and sizes.

13. If you care for a child or children, work with one or many other caregivers to create a mutual aid group if there isn't one already! Distribute multilingual flyers at pickup and drop-off spots for school, day care, or local playgrounds in order to find other



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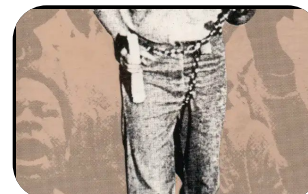
Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Oct 21

Roc, a comrade, a supervisor at a girls shelter that takes in homeless girls, trafficked girls, sexually traumatized and physically abused has a "wish list" from these little precious girl to help them through the holidays and year end. For direct contact with "Roc" dm us

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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 8

Settle your quarrels, come together, understand the reality of our situation, understand that fascism is already here, that people are already dying who could be saved, that generations more will live poor butchered half-lives if you fail to act...



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 8

Do what must be done, discover your humanity and your love in revolution.

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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Jun 12

George L. Jackson calls fascism "reform." In his work "Blood in My Eye," Jackson wrote that the word "reform," more precisely "economic reform," is a working definition of fascist motive forces. He argued that fascism is a response to a threat to the capitalist establishment 1/2



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 3

US has the world's LARGEST prison population, yet it's not a priority issue for most voters. Something's seriously flawed in this picture

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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 3

Break the 2 party system



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

@JailLawSpeak · Nov 3



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 3

Am'rica [with a zionist president pushing] is directly responsible for the current genocidal war we are all witnessing. Your high horse doesn't

impress us. The world is a prison trying to break free! #burntheprisons



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AFRICAN & BLACK HISTORY  
@AfricanArchives · Nov 2

On this day In 1979, the Revolutionary Assata Shakur escaped from U.S prison and later received asylum in Cuba.

A THREAD



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 3

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@JailLawSpeak · Nov 3

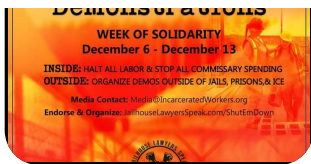
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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Oct 18

(JLS) is seeking to expand the JLS Housing and Resource Center. We are currently seeking a property that fits within our budgetary constraints to establish a national legal resource space, an essential hub where individuals can find free legal support, resources, and community.







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The Appeal  
@theappeal · Nov 14

A damning new DOJ report says people at Atlanta's Fulton County Jail are routinely brutalized and sexually assaulted. People with mental illness, people perceived as gay or transgender, and children are at the greatest risk of violence.

DOJ Finds Deplorable Conditions at Atlanta's Fulton County Jail

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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 16

This is gonna be an interesting four years for you voters. Maybe some of you will get serious about total change.

May these 4 years radicalize you



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 14

Remember!



Arkansas prisonrats "approved an 815-acre site for a planned prison to hold 3,000 inmates, despite objections from residents and local officials"

Note:

1. This is the path rulers are following. Cops & prisons
2. ARKANSAS locals and officials fought it!



Board approves Arkansas site for planned 3,000-inmate prison despite objections - WTOP News  
LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP) — The Arkansas Board of Corrections on Friday approved an 815-acre site for a planned prison to hold 3,000 inmates, despite objections from residents and local officials that...

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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Jul 16

Mutual Aid can be directed directly towards the inside people led Prisoners Human Rights and Jailhouse Lawyers networks/projects by cash app \$ arebelsworld or Venmo @ arebelsworld



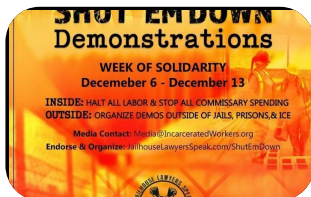
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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 10



Thank you to @IWOC for keeping up the communication bridge with prisoners in different states that plan to participate in the #shutemdown

We have added prisons in six other states that will be participating #burntheprisons



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 10

This is step one [education/uniting] to an even larger upcoming call! We are just warming up!

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The Final Straw  
@thefinalstrawradio@chaos.4  
@StrawFinal · Nov 10

An interview with Maru Mora-Villalpando of @ResistenciaNW about organizing against the private immigration prison the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA.

Then, @pghfashwatch talks about documenting & challenging local fascists in western PA



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Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 9

caregivers to involve. Plan weekly or biweekly meetups at whatever space kids usually hang out (such as a park), and share needs and resources.

14. Revive the concept and practice of kassi, the mutual aid funds/networks that used to keep neighbors afloat and supported in eastern European shtetls. Borrow from your own ancestral traditions/histories of mutual aid to build real-life community by strengthening relations with your neighbors and comrades for the days and years to come.

15. Take time to mourn your losses and grieve your dead—as inseparable from fighting and organizing for the living; as part and parcel of mending the world and ourselves. Set up temporary and ongoing public altars. Paint murals to honor lost friends and comrades. Lean on the deep wisdom of grief rituals that have sustained life for millennia, such as saying Kaddish for the dead or doing shiva after a loss. Make rituals part of your resistance, queering and self-organizing them in collectivity with others. Take those rituals out into your community—by a river, on a street corner, at a DIY space or radical bookfair, during a forest defense or as a direct action.

16. Feed people for free. Look for a Food Not Bombs or Coffee Not Cops chapter or similar non-hierarchical mutual aid project near you, get in touch, and join in collecting ingredients for, cooking, and/or serving a meal. If there's nothing in your area, organize a free picnic; put up posters and encourage everybody to come—and optionally, bring a dish. Talking to the people you share the food with is important; do this if you can. Notice the moment when someone comes to understand that food can be good and free and shared without restrictions, obligations, eligibility criteria, or expectations; this means that things don't have to be the way they are.

17. If a friend or someone you know is having suicidal thoughts and reaches out to you, offer to drop everything and be present with them. Small acts of peer support can make an enormous

difference; think of yourself as a "tourniquet" for them when they most need it. You can hold space for them, for instance; don't make it about you or act scared but instead simply allow them to share feelings, especially without fear of the cops being called. Or keep them company and help look after their basic needs that day. Or let friends and other people you trust know in advance that they can call you in these kinds of situations, and that you'll take a weapon away from them for as long as needed if they ask.

18. Organize a stoop or porch sale with a few other households, or even a regular stoop or porch sale, and use the funds to cover material needs for solidarity efforts, such as abortion or bail funds, or for gender-affirming surgery or aiding folks during a rent strike. Ask yourself: What time and materials could I easily donate that would have an exponential effect and allow me to meet and organize with friends and neighbors in my community? Rather than a personal responsibility or charity, fundraising becomes a way of building deeper networks of care and connection.

19. Engage in play with others as a gateway to imagining other worlds and experimenting with getting there while cultivating camaraderie and goodwill. Hold game nights. Invent your own versions of group "sports" such as capture the flag, tag, and soccer, and gather folks in a park to make riotously merry. Self-organize a queer Purim spiel or other DIY theatrics, and simply be silly (and/or use your performances to make fun of the social order and dream up ways it might tumble). Add playfulness to your banners, events, organizing, and actions.

20. Slow down. Heed Jewish wisdom: days and hours of rest are sacred. Heed disabled wisdom: your work is completely irrelevant to your worth! Your ancestors began weaving unfucked social fabrics and burning down fucked-up ones before you were a glimmer in their eye. Descendants to come will be weaving and unfucking and burning still. What can we even weave with only weak threads connecting us? Trust takes years.

Any faster, and conflict rends our fabric like kri'ah, the Jewish ritual act of tearing cloth in mourning. So come fascism or liberation: weave slow, take sabbaticals, feast on kugel, and sing with your comrades down by the river.

*This zine is a communal effort, with advice gleaned from the following Jewish anarchists: alicia, asher, cat, chanaleh, cindy, cindy barukh, hannah, jhaavo, lilli, mazel, scarab, simcha, and vicky.*

## Don't Panic, Organize: Meeting the Moment of Trump's Second Term

November 21, 2024

Black Rose Anarchist Federation maps out ideas for community organizing in the current moment.

*Donald Trump has once again ascended to the Presidency. Below we lay out our recommendations for how to respond.*

### 1. No Choice But to Fight

The "choice" of this election, like all elections, presented us with no choice at all: one program of open reaction and the other friendly-faced genocide. Still, a Trump victory was far from inevitable.

Presented with an opportunity to overhaul their platform, the Democratic Party instead swapped one stand-in for another without any significant change in position. This was most glaring in Biden and later Harris's willingness to sacrifice the votes of Muslim and Arab Americans by refusing to even slow—let alone stop—US facilitation of Israel's genocidal wars in Gaza and Lebanon.

But other factors prevailed too, including the Democrats' failure to articulate anything resembling a plan to address compounding crises around profit hungry price-gouging, the cost of living, housing,

bodily autonomy, or healthcare.

It is impossible now to argue that Trump is an aberration. He is as American as apple pie, a product of the system of domination that structures our society. If we are to confront a second Trump administration, we must also confront this system of domination—a task that will require organization, bravery, and commitment.

So here we are. While you might be feeling fear, anger, and despair right now, it's not a time to back down. It's time to step up.

2. Hit the Streets

Mass demonstrations and protests play an important role in lifting spirits, creating a sense of shared purpose, and publicly displaying the potential power of organized movements. They are especially important in the moments immediately after a crisis or major event—like the one we're living through right now.

But demonstrations won't be enough. For decades we have seen the limits of mass protest marches. While symbolically powerful, they fail to create the kind of leverage needed to dramatically shift the course of events. To create this leverage we have to...

3. Get Organized

Bring the energy from the streets back home by getting organized and building power in everyday institutions of social life. This might mean organizing a union at work, a tenant union at your apartment complex, an assembly in your neighborhood, or a student organization at school.

In places where these organizations already exist, our task is to build rank-and-file capacity to lead from below and turn them into effective fighting organizations.

Don't get us wrong, none of these things are simple or easy to do—that's the point!

If we want to create real material

leverage that can meet the moment, fight back the worst of what Trump has planned, defend ourselves, and ultimately transform society from the bottom up, we have to build durable organizations that can exert popular power in the places where we work, live, or study.

For pointers on where and how to get started with organizing to build power, check out our "on-ramps" for organizing at the bottom of this article. We need to get organized so we can...

4. Grow Our Movements

As we saw with the first Trump term, millions of people will now be looking for places to channel their frustration—many are going to be open to developing a systemic critique of capitalism and the state. We must be prepared to welcome these newcomers with open arms, patience, and kindness.

Rejecting both paternalism and structurelessness, our movements have to be places that educate and arm people with the tools to fight effectively, while also maintaining truly democratic and bottom up structures.

We're not building exclusive activist clubhouses, we're building combative mass movements that can fight back and win. Movements and movement organizations that are truly welcoming, democratic, and led by the rank-and-file have the potential to...

4. Put the Hurt On

Days of action reinforce that we're not alone in our outrage. But protest leaders rarely direct that righteous anger against the people and institutions that play crucial roles in supporting or carrying out repressive policies.

Amidst Trump's first term, movements learned to focus collective pressure. For example, targeting airports with mass shutdowns and welcoming parties for migrants stymied his first attempt at a Muslim ban. Later,

thousands set up encampments outside Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facilities to demand an end to the administration's vicious kids-in-cages and child separation policies.

To counter the repressive policies of the incoming administration, we must identify strategic targets and force them to reckon with our collective strength.

Still, while protest marches or even prolonged actions might disrupt the normal function of society for a short period, organization in everyday sites of struggle—our workplaces, neighborhoods, and schools—can create deeper, more prolonged disruptions that really put the hurt on. We saw examples of this too during the first Trump term, where some experimented with neighborhood assembly models that had success in protecting migrants by disrupting the activity of ICE.

Once we've built the organization and power, we have to exert it through labor, rent, and student strikes, as well as other confrontational mass tactics and approaches that can disrupt business and politics as usual.

Like we said at the top though, Trump is one symptom of a broader system of domination. To combat and ultimately end that system, we need a long term strategy to...

5. Consolidate Popular Power

To confront this moment our most immediate tasks are building organization and exerting power through disruptive tactics. But we can't stop there.

Organized disruptions give us a taste of our real power: we make this world run, and we can make it stop, too. But what would it look like to democratically control where we live, work, or study...for good?

We call this popular power, the ability of combative social movements to give people the leverage needed to begin exerting

Prison Slavery: #WeAreNotBeasts @SlaveryPrison · Nov 23

This month, men in VA State Prison self-immolated. This isn't isolated. Prisoners in EVERY STATE, incl. SC, where one person died [while laughing pigs watched], have resorted to self due to desperately trying to be moved. The most common you hear of is self-harm cutting.



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - @JailLawSpeak · Nov 23

It's always scary when the smoke rolls out and knowing it is the correctional staff who decides when or if they will open any doors to relieve you of the smoke inhalation. We all know those employees not going to risk their lives for ours

Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - @JailLawSpeak · Nov 23

For us, this is another reason prison abolition must be a priority of action and fewer conversations

Nina Turner @ninaturner · Nov 22

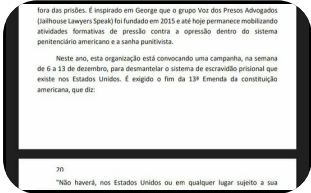
10 years. A decade.

Tamir's life mattered. We will never stop fighting for him and all the other stolen lives. My thoughts are with his family today, especially.



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - @JailLawSpeak · Nov 20

From Brazil to the USA! Thank you Brazil, for mention of our organizing activities.



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - @JailLawSpeak · Nov 23

HOLIDAY SOPNSORS: JLS Seasonal Joy Project For Children: Requesting people who would like to sponsor children of imprisoned ppl this holiday. Children of people in prison usually come from the poorest and have the toughest times during the holidays. Join us again this season

Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - @JailLawSpeak · Nov 23



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - @JailLawSpeak · Nov 16

TYPO NOTED

Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -

Jailhouse Lawyers Speak · Nov 16

If you would like to become a JLS sponsor for a child with an imprisoned parent, please email us at jailhouselawyersspeak@protonmail.c

You will be matched directly by email or phone with the caregiver.

#HappyHolidays



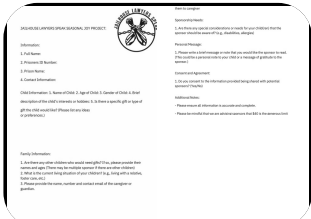
Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - @JailLawSpeak · Oct 22

Jailhouse Lawyers Speak needs your support to distribute JLS Holiday forms to:

Prisons  
Jails  
Immigration centers.

Mail to those with children. We're connecting them with holiday sponsors!

Email us for the application to download or Qs: jailhouselawyersspeak@protonmail.c



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak - @JailLawSpeak · Nov 16

With communications strengthening across the states by people in prisons with each other, people inside are already asking what's next for 2025? What do we need to do! Organize, organize, organize for disruptions, and the demands #endprisonslavery #burntheprisons







Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Jul 16

Mutual Aid can be directed directly towards the inside people led Prisoners Human Rights and Jailhouse Lawyers networks/projects by cash app \$ arebelsworld or Venmo @ arebelsworld



FREE LEONARD PELTIER NOW  
@RealPeltierHQ · Nov 24

Hi Folks! The Leonard Peltier Toy Drive is underway. You can drop off new toys, mail gift cards to Leonard's niece, or donate. There is no way to leave a message in the donation, but our we thank all donors and ask if you are donating to the Pine Ridge Toy Drive. We will send you a spreadsheet listing your donation, and our progress. Let's make some kids happy!

#FreeLeonardPeltier



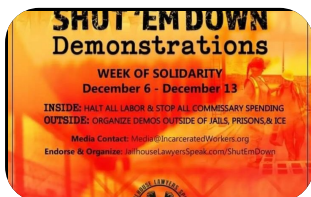
Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 24

\*JLS Seasonal Joy Project\*: Our annual initiative connects imprisoned parents' children with sponsors to receive December holiday gifts. We'll be answering letters, emails, and facilitating these connections. To be a sponsor email jailhouselawyerspeak@protonmail.c



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 24

\*SHUT 'EM DOWN demos\*: People in prisons and jails across multiple states will be disrupting business as usual, with some facilities holding organizing groups for future mass Shut 'Em Down planning.



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 24

\*2025 Abolitionist Convergence\*: Mark your calendars for Black August 2025! Jailhouse Lawyers Speak will be hosting a convergence, with details on location and time to be announced soon.

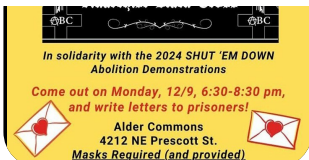
Stay tuned for updates on these initiatives.

Dare 2 struggle, Dare 2 win!



Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 24

Solidarity with Portland ABC! #burntheprisons



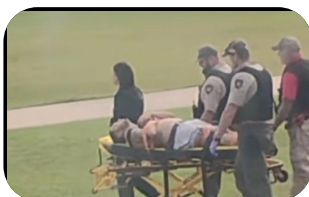
Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 24

Israel lobbyists prove that politicians can be bought across the board for support.

Lobbying is a powerful tool when coupled with

Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 23

Self mutilation is far too common in prisons and jails but rarely publicly discussed



Prison Slavery:  
#WeAreNotBeasts  
@SlaveryPrison · Nov 23

\*\* Self-harm cutting is where the person cuts on themselves. Sometimes, self cutting results in unaliving because pigs and nurses just let them bleed out (medical neglect) or refuse to respond with speed because they have become desensitized after numerous episodes

Jailhouse Lawyers Speak -  
@JailLawSpeak · Nov 23

Although some have said these are not protests, we absolutely see these as protests because they are demanding usually to be transferred for the self mutil@tion to stop. Admittedly, most observing prisoners do not like these kinds of protests when locked behind max cell doors

control over their own everyday institutions. Building the organization and power to confront our present moment is one step toward this greater popular power.

## 6. Find a Political Home

While organizations rooted in everyday sites of struggle are the frontlines of any effective mass social movement, we also recognize the importance of having a place to develop political perspectives, strategies, and tactics that extend beyond this moment and toward a revolutionary horizon.

Black Rose/Rosa Negra is our political home. We strategize together so we can act together, all pushing in the same direction toward our ultimate objective of social revolution and libertarian socialism.

If you're engaged in organizing to build power, [reach out to us](#).

*Included here are a collection of articles, audio pieces, and other resources that provide what we are calling "on-ramps" to organizing.*

## The Opening Statement – Fall 2024

November 12, 2024

Michigan Abolition and Prisoner Solidarity presents a new issue of *The Opening Statement*.

MAPS presents Issue 22 of *The Opening Statement*, a free quarterly newsletter that features articles, poetry, political writing and opinion pieces, as well as other relevant pieces by non-incarcerated authors.

**THE OPENING STATEMENT - FALL 2024** (CLICK THE LINK TO DOWNLOAD PDF)

### ARTICLES AND AUTHORS LISTED BELOW:

- [To Build an Abolitionist Future, We Must Look to Indigenous Pasts](#) Cherise

Morris

- [The Perplexing Smiles of Children from Palestine](#) Khaliifah Ibn Rayford Daniels (Marcellus Williams)
- [As Climate Change Worsens, Deadly Prison Heat Is Increasingly an Everywhere Problem](#) Elizabeth Weill-Greenberg

Happy autumn, comrade!

We wrote and organized this issue of *The Opening Statement* as the leaves on the trees outside turn from green to red, orange, and brown and as the nights get a little cooler. In this issue, we present three articles and one poem. In past issues, we've talked a lot about the political urgency of prison and police abolition—projects that are often dismissed as utopian or unrealistic or just "crazy."

The first article, "To Build an Abolitionist Future, We Must Look to Indigenous Pasts," directly addresses this tendency to dismiss abolition as a project. It does this by exploring the historic social structures and practices that predate the creation of prisons and police. The article also shows that abolition isn't just a future we have to envision and build together, but also an actually-existing past that can guide us in the process. The author, Cherise Morris, is writing from Detroit, in occupied territories called Waawiyiataaonong, named by the Anishinaabeg which includes the Three Fires Confederacy of Ojibwe (Chippewa), Odawa (Ottawa), and Bodewatomi (Potawatomi) peoples.

The second article discusses how global warming is affecting prisons across the US, and how few prisons are equipped to cope with it. Michigan ranks near the bottom of the barrel with few facilities having any air conditioned housing. 2023 was officially the hottest year on record and this year is on track to surpass it. Also, the author of the article notes that six states, including Michigan, refused to respond to the survey on which the article is based, so they had to use local news reports instead. Let's just say that we're not surprised by MDOC's lack of transparency. So,

if you have anything to add about heating and cooling in MDOC, we'd love to hear from you.

The poem we've chosen to include is by the martyr Khaliifah Ibn Rayford Daniels (Marcellus Williams). Khaliifah was a father, an imam, and a poet who was held captive by the state of Missouri until he was executed by the state on September 24, 2024. Despite enormous evidence of his innocence, and of police and prosecutorial misconduct, the killing took place, despite enormous evidence of his innocence and of police and prosecutorial misconduct. The prosecutors in the case, the victim's family, 1.5 million Americans, and three U.S. Supreme Court Justices expressed their opposition to the execution. But governor Mike Parson and the state supreme court refused to halt it or grant clemency. Note that this is the same governor (formerly a rural sheriff) who pardoned 600 people in three years, the highest rate since WWII. Those granted his forgiveness include a white minister, a white man from Parson's home county whose drunk driving put a 5-year-old into a coma, and a white couple who pointed firearms at passing Black Lives Matters marchers. We include Khaliifah's poem, "The Perplexing Smiles of the Children of Palestine," in tribute to him and in honor of his international solidarity.

And now for the news roundup. First, a *Metro Times* article by Steve Neavling discusses a new online tool called the National Police Index, which allows people to access the employment history of police officers. The idea is to keep track of cops who engage in misconduct and are forced out of one police department, only to be hired at a different one. For example, a cop named Kairy Roberts was forced to resign from the Detroit Police Department in 2021 after punching an unarmed man in the face, failing to provide medical aid, and lying about it. However, the Detroit police failed to report his misconduct as required, and he quickly got a job with the Eastpointe Police Department. Unfortunately but not surprisingly, the Michigan State

Police “have refused to disclose public records about the identities of current and former police officers.” so Michigan does not appear in the database.

The *Detroit Free Press* published an article on September 10 about the new Wayne County Jail. Built by Dan Gilbert’s construction company for \$670 million, the new jail had opened the week before and was already plagued by problems, including:

1. Fewer visiting rooms. There are only five visiting rooms for the entire facility, whereas the old jail had two or three rooms on every floor. As a result, lawyers are being forced to wait for hours to meet with their clients.
2. Lack of privacy for legal conversations. A defense attorney told the reporter that “confidential conversations between attorneys and inmates can be heard so clearly throughout the complex, including in courtrooms, that passersby can hear nearly every detail of their client’s cases, causing possible constitutional violations.”
3. Technological failures: “Doors aren’t working right, and neither are brand new TVs, phones, and tablets for inmates.”

The article also points to staff shortages similar to those in MDOC. It’s worth remembering that Gilbert, a power-hungry real estate developer, made the deal to build the new jail in exchange for taking over a property in Greektown where the county had started building a jail (known as the “fail jail”). The county abandoned that project in 2013 after it had gone \$91 million over budget and was nowhere near completion. So, not only did Gilbert make hundreds of millions of dollars off this (flawed) construction project, he also acquired a piece of prime real estate from the county.

One part of this new jail complex houses the Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility. Some of you might have been locked up at the old facility on St. Antoine in Detroit, which was so overcrowded and unsafe for youth that in 2022,

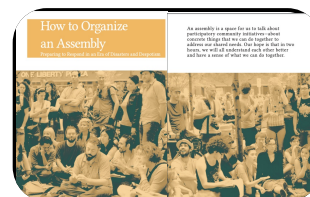
they were temporarily moved to an empty adult jail in Hamtramck. The *Free Press* has reported since then on the endless and horrifying stories of “deplorable” and “inhumane” conditions for youth. Most shouldn’t even be housed in detention, but because two residential facilities were shut down after their own horrors came to light, there are long waitlists for the few “secure” residential beds for youth. The county blames the state for not doing more to replace facilities, and the state blames the county for violating licensing regulations. We don’t believe MDHHS that they do not “compromise on child safety.” From the stories, too numerous to summarize here, they do far worse than that. The state is repeatedly and directly endangering the lives of our most vulnerable youth in countless deplorable ways. A recent report by a retired cop who worked at JDF for four months revealed even more neglect. He was fired for trying to blow the whistle. Since September 4, youth have been housed at the new jail facility, but the whistleblower said, “You can’t take an old broken system into a new building. You still have the same problems...It’s hurtful to understand that you are working to help kids and that the whole system is set up for disaster, for failure.”

We’ve written before about the students, staff, and faculty at the University of Michigan who have been protesting the university’s complicity with Israeli genocide. The university’s \$18 billion endowment is invested in (among many other terrible things) US weapons companies that sell arms to Israel—fighter planes, missiles, bombs, bullets, and so on that the Israeli military is using in its ongoing campaign against Palestinians and others—which means that the university profits from Israel’s genocidal violence. In response to their protests, the university has doubled down on repression, sending in the police to violently dismantle the Gaza solidarity encampment, charging students and staff members with disciplinary violations, banning some of them from campus and firing others, and getting the Washtenaw County prosecutor to charge four protesters criminally for

their alleged role in a sit-in in the administration building. Now, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel has announced that, at the request of the president of the university, her office is filing criminal charges against 11 additional protesters. Protesters released a statement denouncing the charges and contrasting the attorney general’s decision to charge student protesters while deciding last year to stop pursuing criminal charges over the Flint water crisis: “In conjunction with [Attorney General] Nessel’s recent failure to deliver justice for the victims of the Flint Water crisis, this unfounded attack is a clear demonstration of the remarkable ineptitude of the attorney general office, and the criminal justice system as a whole.”

At the same time, news came out in early October that Attorney General Nessel will *not* be investigating the illegal destruction of thousands of prosecutor files in Wayne County. Nearly all files dating from 1995 and before were destroyed by *someone* at the prosecutor’s office between 2001 and 2004—the period when current Detroit mayor Mike Duggan was prosecutor and *AG Nessel worked in his office*. Michigan law requires prosecutors to retain files of defendants serving life sentences for at least 50 years, or until the defendant dies. The destruction of these files makes it extremely difficult for defendants to prove wrongful conviction. The reporter Steve Neavling writes in the *Metro Times* that many of the records that were destroyed came from the 1980s and 90s, a period when the Detroit Police Department’s homicide division was notoriously corrupt and engaged in “rampant misconduct, false confessions, [and] constitutional abuses of witnesses and suspects.” The result was “an alarming number of wrongful convictions and false confessions, as illustrated by a spike in exonerations and court settlements stemming from that era.” It’s not entirely clear what happened with the records, but Neavling concludes that “there are indications of a coverup.” For example, a county logbook that is supposed to record the destruction of public records appears to have

Time is short!



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 12

Meanwhile, this month’s global talks on climate change will be hosted by Azerbaijan, an unrepentant petro-state that just last year used oil revenues to carry out full-scale ethnic cleansing in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh, which was inhabited by Armenians until September 2023. In the months since then, the autocratic government of Azerbaijan has locked up dozens of Azerbaijani journalists and activists, including Anar Mammadli, co-founder of the Climate Justice Initiative.

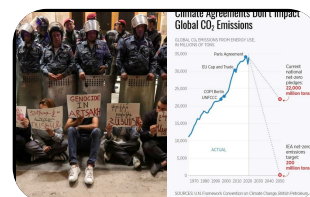
Suffice it to say that, especially with Donald Trump taking over the US government at the head of the petrochemical lobby, it is a grave mistake to look to government agencies to moderate the processes that are causing climate change. Grassroots movements employing direct action are our only hope.

Background on Azerbaijan and ethnic cleansing:

<https://crimethinc.com/artsakh>

Background on the relationship between capitalism, government, and the climate disaster:

<https://crimethinc.com/Climate2024>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
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Nov 12

A few months ago, the conservative party came to power in Valencia, Spain with the support of the far right. One of their first acts was to eliminate climate emergency

services. At the end of October, flooding exacerbated by climate change killed over 200 people in the region.

Massive numbers of people mobilized horizontally to respond to the flooding through mutual aid. Despite their ties to the conservative government, far-right groups have tried to hijack popular anger over the state’s failures. This is the classic strategy of fascists and demagogues: create a crisis, then try to capitalize on it.

We salute the anarchists and anti-fascists in Valencia organizing against the flood, the government, and the far right.

The sign in the attached images reads “We clear out politicians like we clear our mud”; the logo reads “We clear out fascism like we clear out mud.” The photograph shows Valencia City Hall smeared with mud and graffiti calling the right-wing mayor a murderer.

Capitalism is the disaster!



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Nov 11

This is a good time to make sure that everyone in your broader community is using Signal and knows how to anonymize their identity on it. This flier offers QR codes to make it easy. You can print out this design here:

<https://cdn.crimethinc.com/assets/arti>

You could use the blank space on the flier to add a third QR code directing people to a local announcements-only Signal thread to stay abreast of developments.

You can learn how to set one up here:

<https://crimethinc.com/announcements>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 10

How to Organize an Assembly

Preparing to Respond in an Era of Disasters and Despotism

<https://crimethinc.com/AssemblyHow>

There are times when people who have counted on politicians and specialists to solve their problems suddenly realize that their only hope is to make contact with others like themselves and work together. But how do we connect with them—or at least connect them with each other? One answer is to host an open assembly.

Here, we offer a brief guide, along with some sample discussion questions you could use to talk through how to prepare for the second Donald Trump administration.



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 9

The fact that an aspiring autocrat has won an election does not oblige us to submit to him. No one should excuse being complicit in tyranny on the grounds that other people voted for it.

<https://crimethinc.com/democracy>

People will scribble in a box for any number of reasons—misinformation, advertising, bigotry, fantasies of power—regardless of whether it is actually in their best interests. But what we do every day determines what kind of society we live in.





languages.

We announce all non-English versions of our projects as they appear on our Telegram channel (<https://t.me/ExWorkers>), as that is the most widely followed by non-Anglophones—and we don't want to overload those who follow our other platforms.



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 16

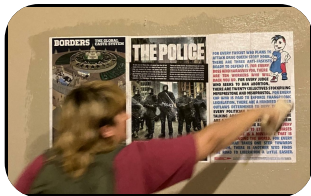
Make the walls of your community a forum for expression! Show everyone in your community that resistance to capitalism and authoritarianism are widespread!

You can download or order posters from us here:

<https://crimethinc.com/posters>

To put them up, you can use spray adhesive, wallpaper paste, or mix your own wheatpaste:

<https://crimethinc.com/wheatpasting>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 14

Get off X/Twitter now!

It's not strategic to try to hold territory on a platform where the algorithms are designed to systematically center authoritarian narratives and cryptocurrency schemes. At this point, the participation of those who are not in favor of authoritarianism only serves to preserve the illusion that X/Twitter is a public square, when in fact it is a means of social control.

With Elon Musk playing a role in the incoming Trump administration, it is

a safe bet that X/Twitter will be providing intelligence directly to federal agencies for the purposes of monitoring and attacking dissent. Musk is already looting everything on the platform for his AI ventures.

Millions are joining Bluesky, but Mastodon is a more decentralized and autonomous option. Set up Signal loops. Get in the habit of meeting regularly in person.

<https://crimethinc.com/TwitterCanary>

Spread this far and wide!



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 14

We've also prepared a zine version of "The Eye of Every Storm," in which a local anarchist involved in longstanding disaster response efforts in Appalachia recounts the lessons that they have learned in the course of responding to Hurricane Helene and offers advice about how to prepare for the disasters to come.

<https://crimethinc.com/zines/the-eye-of-every-storm-anarchist-response-to-hurricane-helene>

Again, please print and distribute them!

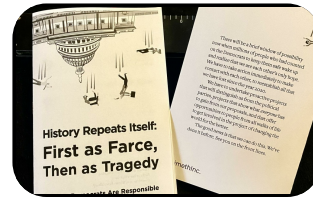


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Nov 14

We've prepared a zine version of our text exploring why the Democrats are responsible for Donald Trump's return to power and what we have to do to regain the initiative.

<https://crimethinc.com/zines/history-repeats-itself-first-as-farce-then-as-tragedy>

Please print these out and distribute them in your community!



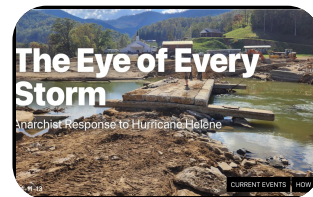
CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 13

The Eye of Every Storm: Anarchist Response to Hurricane Helene

<https://crimethinc.com/HurricaneHele>

At the end of September 2024, Hurricane Helene laid waste to western North Carolina. In the following reflection, a local anarchist involved in longstanding disaster response efforts in Appalachia recounts the lessons that they have learned over the past six weeks and offers advice about how to prepare for the disasters to come.

At a time when misinformation, rising authoritarianism, and disasters exacerbated by industrially-produced climate change are creating a feedback loop of escalating crisis, it's crucial to understand disaster response as an integral part of community defense and strategize about how this can play a part in movements for liberation.



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 13

We've prepared a zine version of our text, "How to Organize an Assembly: Preparing to Respond in an Era of Disasters and Despotism."

<https://crimethinc.com/zines/how-to-organize-an-assembly>

Please print these out and distribute them!

And above all, organize assemblies to bring people together to prepare to defend each other!

been tampered with.

According to an article from September 5 in *The Appeal*, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has opened an internal investigation into a brutal deployment of pepper spray and brutality on August 2 at Central California Women's Facility (CCWF) where more than 100 women were locked in a cafeteria for several hours without air conditioning. COs pepper-sprayed the women and beat them when they asked for food, medication, or even for a reason why they were being held there. Women were zip-tied and continued to be sprayed with chemical spray as they lay on the ground. With "a round of spray that looked like a river of orange," guards continued to attack prisoners until many of the women were vomiting and had seizures. In the aftermath of the attack, many victims of guard brutality were intimidated into signing "non-enemy chrono," or paperwork that indicates that the prisoner is not concerned for their safety and that they had not experienced brutality from the guards. The investigation is ongoing, though we don't have much faith in these investigations which take a long time and rarely offer even a modicum of justice. Have you heard of similar types of intimidation where you have been held?

Hurricane Helene made landfall on September 26, 2024 causing devastating floods and power outages throughout the southeastern US. Western North Carolina was especially hard hit. *The Intercept* reports that many prisoners in the state were essentially abandoned: "more than 550 men incarcerated at Mountain View [Correctional Institution in Spruce Pine, NC] suffered in cells without lights or running water. . . . As nearby residents sought refuge from the storm, the men were stuck in prison—by definition, without the freedom to leave—in close quarters with their own excrement for nearly a week from September 27 until October 2." There was also little food or water: "four crackers for breakfast, a cup of juice or milk, and two pieces of bread with peanut butter for lunch and dinner.

Potable drinking water did not arrive for several days." All in all, 2,000 prisoners were eventually evacuated from five prisons in the region that were hit by floods. As we write this introduction, Hurricane Milton, which looks to be even more powerful, is approaching Florida's Gulf coast, and the governor has refused to evacuate jails and prisons in mandatory evacuation areas.

Israel's relentless bombing of Gaza has expanded to Lebanon in recent weeks. Lebanon is where Hezbollah, a militant group that formed to liberate the country during a previous Israeli invasion, is based. Over the past year, Hezbollah has fired rockets at Israel in solidarity with the Palestinians in Gaza, to try to divert Israel's military resources away from Gaza. Many displaced Palestinians also live in Lebanon today, including tens of thousands of the 750,000 Palestinians who Zionist forces violently expelled in order to establish the state of Israel in 1948, a process that Palestinians call the *Nakba* ("catastrophe" in Arabic). The Israeli escalation began with a terrifying "pager" attack. Hezbollah began to use pagers to communicate because cell phones are more vulnerable to hacking and surveillance—especially dangerous because Israel can identify someone's location from their cell phone data and use that information to bomb them. But at 3:30 pm on Tuesday, September 17, some 3,000 pagers in use across Lebanon exploded simultaneously, killing at least 12 people, including several children, and injuring nearly 3,000 more. The next day, walkie-talkies and other devices exploded across Beirut, the capital of Lebanon, killing another 20 people and injuring 450 more. There's a lot that's still unclear about what happened, but it seems that Israel infiltrated the supply chain and planted explosives in a shipment of pagers of the brand that Hezbollah had ordered. Of course, they had no way of knowing who was using the pagers at the time of the explosion, so many of the victims of the attack had no connection to the militant group. Also, the pagers were programmed to beep for several seconds before exploding, which meant that people picked them up

to look at them, and the devices exploded in their hands and faces—many, including children at their kitchen tables, shoppers at grocery stores, and health care workers at clinics, were blinded and mutilated by the bombs.

Things escalated further on September 27 when Israel attacked again, using US-made F-15 fighter jets to drop US-made BLU-109 bunker-buster bombs on a residential area of a suburb of Beirut in an assassination attempt on Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah. Nasrallah was killed in the attack, and six apartment buildings were completely flattened. All in all, according to the Lebanese government as of October 11, Israel's recent attacks on Lebanon have killed over 2,000 and injured about 10,000 people. And now Israel has begun a ground invasion, sending troops across the border. (Hezbollah has stated that their fighters repelled the initial Israeli offensive, and the Israeli military acknowledged that on October 2 eight Israeli soldiers had already been killed in the fighting and others wounded.) Here in Michigan, the Arab ethnic enclave of Dearborn has been the site of daily funerals for families whose loved ones are being killed in Lebanon.

All of this is happening as Israel's genocidal campaign against the Palestinian people grinds on. Gaza, as you know, has been devastated. According to *Al Jazeera*, as of October 2, Israel has officially killed over 41,500 people and wounded nearly 100,000 in Gaza, with an estimated 10,000 more unaccounted for beneath the rubble of destroyed buildings. Although the Gaza Health Ministry has done impressive work, it has gotten harder and harder for them to keep track of the dead, not only because so many have been killed or remain trapped under the rubble, but also because Israel has targeted the facilities they use to do this work, including hospitals. We likely won't know the true number of deaths until many years from now. But a report published on July 10 in the prestigious medical journal *The Lancet* tries to estimate a more accurate total number of deaths for which Israel is responsible. The

authors point out that conflicts have “indirect health implications beyond the direct harm from violence.” For example, since Israel has almost completely destroyed Gaza’s health infrastructure and public utilities, and has continued to prevent food and humanitarian aid from entering Gaza, many people will continue to die from lack of healthcare, food, and water even if the fighting were to stop. Using the current direct death toll, the estimate of total direct and indirect deaths would now be over 207,000.

*Did You Know?* Someone suggested a new feature for *TOS* in which we share facts about history that have been kept secret or that we’ve been lied to about. We thought this was a great idea, so here’s the first entry of *Did You Know?* We’re writing this introduction around the federal holiday of “Columbus Day,” which this year falls on Monday, October 14. This gruesome holiday celebrates the beginning of Europe’s genocidal colonization of the Americas. We wanted to say something about this genocide—an important term for understanding the past as well as the present, as the news from Palestine continually reminds us. In the entry of his diary for October 12, 1492, Christopher Columbus described reaching an island he called “Hispaniola” (that’s the island in the Caribbean that today is divided between Haiti and the Dominican Republic). About the Indigenous people, Columbus wrote: “They should be good and intelligent servants, for I see that they say very quickly everything that is said to them; and I believe they would become Christians very easily, for it seemed to me that they had no religion. Our Lord pleasing, at the time of my departure I will take six of them from here to Your Highness in order that they may learn to speak.” From the very first moments, Columbus saw the Indigenous people as resources to be taken and exploited, as slaves. The processes of conquest, dispossession, enslavement, forced labor, and disease that were set in motion as a result together contributed to the mass death of the Indigenous population of the Americas. It’s hard to know exactly how many people there were at the

time of Columbus’s voyage because population statistics and censuses didn’t exist until centuries later, but historians who have studied this topic estimate that there were about 50 million Indigenous people living across the Americas, from what’s now Canada in the north to what’s now Chile in the south. Within 100 years, these historians continue, the number had dropped to about 5 million, which means that 90% of the Indigenous population, or 45 million people, were wiped out as a consequence of European colonization.

The numbers are so large that they’re hard to even grasp. How can we comprehend a catastrophe on such a vast scale? One way to approach this question comes from a recent study from 2019 by a group of climate scientists. By boring holes into Antarctic glacier ice, climate scientists can read how much carbon dioxide or methane there was in the atmosphere at particular moments in the Earth’s history. The authors of the study found that the year 1610 (a little over a hundred years after Columbus’s voyage) was the point with the lowest levels of carbon dioxide. They explain this finding by suggesting that one consequence of the genocide caused by European colonization was the elimination of millions of Indigenous farmers, whose agricultural lands, where they had previously grown crops like corn, beans, and squash, were taken over by forests. Trees are a carbon sink, which means they absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Since rising levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere means a warming planet, as we know from the science of climate change, falling levels of carbon dioxide will do the opposite, cooling the planet. The authors conclude that the genocide of the Indigenous people of the Americas set off a “Little Ice Age” that affected the entire planet, reducing global temperatures to their lowest point in at least the last two thousand years. So, if fossil capitalism and industrialization have demonstrated how human activity can affect the climate in devastating ways, the European colonization of the Americas and the consequent genocide of the Indigenous people is another

example of the same phenomenon, but flipped.

Finally, we want to suggest a topic to think and talk about with each other. Throughout the history of prisoner support organizing, the question of “political prisoners” in relation to incarceration in the US looms large. Some of you don’t identify as political prisoners, some do, some of you may consider yourselves to be politicized by your experience of incarceration, but not political prisoners per se. We’d love to hear your reflections on this topic, and to add to the conversation here is a quote from George Jackson: “*All Black people, wherever they are, whatever their crimes, even crimes against other Blacks, are political prisoners because the system has dealt with them differently than whites.*” Do you agree with Jackson? Why or why not? Do you consider yourself to be a political prisoner? Is it useful to distinguish between “political” and “non-political” prisoners? Have your ideas on this issue changed, and if so in what way? We’d be really interested to read your thoughts about these or other related questions.

As always, please send us art, poetry, writing, reflections, etc! Unfortunately, as we’ve already explained, MDOC now blocks *TOS* issues that contain writing by Michigan prisoners. But we would love to hear your thoughts, analysis, and suggestions in response to the contents of the newsletter. Be sure to share this issue with friends.

In solidarity,  
MAPS

Photo by [Satit Wongsampan](#) on [Unsplash](#)

## Resisting Trump and the MAGA Movement: Interview with Antifascist Matthew Lyons of Three Way Fight

November 12, 2024



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 21

We’ve reprinted 5000 more of the sticker version of our Gender Self-Determination design. We’ve already sent 10,000 of these stickers out with orders.

You can order or download the poster version here:

<https://crimethinc.com/posters/gender-self-determination-poster>

Fight gender fascism!

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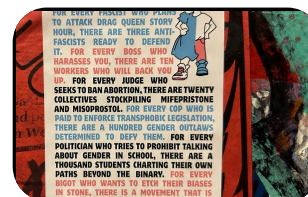
“Between far-right street violence and a wave of new laws restricting education, self-expression, healthcare, and reproductive autonomy, bigots are attempting to gain control over every aspect of our bodies and our sexuality. We can call this gender fascism.

“This is the local manifestation of a global surge of reactionary violence and state repression. Defending each other against this assault is not just marginal ‘identity politics.’ We are challenging some of the narratives and mechanisms that are central to the functioning of authoritarian power in the twenty-first century. From Mar-a-Lago to Moscow, aspiring despots and reigning dictators tell us that normative gender roles are fundamental to the hierarchies they are trying to prop up. They’re probably right.

“If we want to win, though, we need a transformative framework to describe what we’re fighting for.

“Many advocates use language about preserving or extending rights when they explain why they oppose oppression.

“We propose a different framework: gender self-determination.”



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 20

The Case for Resistance: What

We’re Up Against—and What It Could Look Like to Fight

<https://crimethinc.com/resist2025>

We have prepared a full analysis of what we can expect from Donald Trump’s second term and how we can prepare to confront it.

If you’re wondering how to resist, please review these proposals.



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 19

We’ve produced a zine version of our text “Anarchist Techno Attacks,” revisiting the history of Reclaim the Streets—a viral model for the joyous transformation of urban space that emerged in the 1990s from the intersection of ecological resistance movements and the rave scene.

<https://crimethinc.com/zines/anarchist-techno-attacks-a-brief-history-of-reclaim-the-streets>

Please print these out and distribute them! Pass on the history of our culture of resistance!



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 19

The Ex-Worker Podcast, episode #107: The Eye of Every Storm

How have anarchists responded to Hurricane Helene? What lessons can they offer us about how to prepare for the disasters to come?

<https://crimethinc.com/exworker107>

Thanks to [@Audibleanarchist](#) for their contribution to this.



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 18

If we let Donald Trump and Stephen Miller expand the infrastructure of state violence, involving the military and building “vast holding facilities,” they will not stop at deporting undocumented immigrants.

Once that infrastructure exists, they will turn it against one scapegoat after another. They will come after one “internal enemy” after another. Eventually, they will come for all of us.

All of us have a stake in resisting. It’s our own lives at stake.

<https://crimethinc.com/borders>



CrimethInc. Ex-Workers  
@CrimethInc@todon.eu •  
Nov 17

The photograph shows our Brazilian comrades tabling at the anarchist book fair in Porto Alegre last weekend with many of our publications in Portuguese, including our new poster design, “Capitalism is the dance of death.”

<https://crimethinc.com/posters/capitalism-is-the-dance-of-death>

It’s also available in Basque and Spanish!

If you ever need any of our publications in a language other than English, whether an article, a poster, a zine, a book, or something else, just look at its page on our site. Under the title, you’ll see a list of the languages in which we offer it; just click on the one you need. Thanks to the tireless work of translators, we have material available on our website in four dozen different





"Donald Trump said on Monday that his administration would declare a national emergency and use the US military to carry out mass deportations of undocumented immigrants."

Trump and Miller have described plans to federalize state national guard personnel and deploy them for immigration enforcement, including sending troops from friendly Republican-governed states into neighboring states with governors who decline to participate. Miller has also advocated for building large-scale detention "camps" and tents."

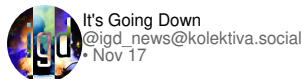
<https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/nov/18/trump-military-mass-deportation>



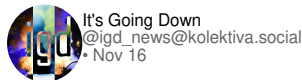
Trump confirms he will utilize US military to conduct mass deportations. President-elect plans to declare a national emergency for undocumented immigrants with help of hardline cabinet



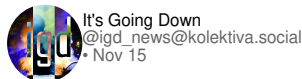
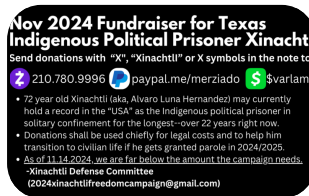
Assembly in #Olympia, #Washington.  
<https://pugetsoundanarchists.org/stca-winter-anarchist-assembly/>



#Seattle



Fundraiser for anarchist political prisoner Xinchitli. More info here:  
<https://freealvaro.net/uncategorized/>



Banner drop in #Davis, #California.



In the course of three decades of activity, in addition to publishing books, we have released dozens of records, punk and hardcore and otherwise.

We've finally put one of the missing ones online—the split LP featuring From the Depths and Next Victim, released in 2011.

<https://crimethinc.bandcamp.com/album/the-depths-next-victim-split>

You can download all of the records we've released free of charge at our bandcamp page.

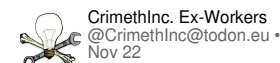


The Ex-Worker podcast, episode #108: The Case for Resistance

<https://crimethinc.com/exworker108>

What we can expect from Donald Trump's second term? How we can prepare to confront it?

"This is a pivotal moment, and everyone who isn't cynically detached is sounding the alarm. Those of us who recognize the necessity of fighting had better find each other, identify the strengths and weaknesses of all the parties involved, recall the lessons of the past eight years, and strategize."



As we prepare for to confront Donald Trump's second term, we can study the various struggles of the first Trump era in order to refine a sense of strategy and historic context.

<https://crimethinc.com/thetrumpyears>

This is a chronology of resistance and direct action under the first Trump administration.



No Borders Media speaks with Matthew Lyons from *Three Way Fight* on Trumpism.

This episode of *No Borders Media*, recorded on the eve of the 2024 U.S. presidential election, features an interview with anti-fascist writer and researcher Matthew Lyons. Matthew, who lives and works in Philadelphia, is the author of *Insurgent Supremacists: The U.S. Far Right's Challenge to State and Empire* and co-editor of the book *Three Way Fight: Revolutionary Politics and Antifascism*.

In this interview, Matthew provides insights on the far-right Trump/MAGA movement and the normalization of previously disqualifying racist, quasi-fascist, and fascist ideologies within it. We explore different elements of the MAGA coalition, including Christian nationalism; the origins of modern-day Trumpism in various historical currents in American history; and anti-fascist strategies and tactics for long-term resistance to the far right. Lyons describes and explains why a return of Trump to the U.S. presidency would be catastrophic, but he also argues that the Harris Democrats are abysmal.

Background:

- Three Way Fight: Against Fascism, Against the State, For a Free Humanity: [threewayfight.org/](https://threewayfight.org/)
- Notes on Trump/MAGA 2024: [threewayfight.org/notes-on-trump-maga-2024/](https://threewayfight.org/notes-on-trump-maga-2024/)
- Listen to this previous No Borders Media podcast: an interview with It's Going Down in January 2024 on resisting the far right and fascism in the U.S.A. over the coming year: [nobordersmedia.com/whats-going-down-a-look-at-the-upcoming-year-of-resisting-the-far-right-fascism-in-the-usa](https://nobordersmedia.com/whats-going-down-a-look-at-the-upcoming-year-of-resisting-the-far-right-fascism-in-the-usa)

Details:

- Interview with Matthew Lyons recorded on November 1, 2024.
- Show uploaded to SoundCloud on November 5, 2024.
- An edited version of this show aired on CKUT 90.3 FM in Montreal on November 7, 2024.
- Producer: Jaggi Singh, for No Borders Media.

No Borders Media shares and creates content in support of the struggles of the working class and oppressed peoples and in opposition to capitalism and colonialism. You can hear us on the first Thursday of every month from 5-6 PM, as part of Off The Hour on CKUT 90.3 FM in Montreal (ckut.ca). Check out No Borders Media on SoundCloud and our active social media, including Facebook, Instagram, Bluesky, Threads, Twitter, and Mastodon, for links to upcoming and previous shows.

Photo by [Vince Fleming](#) on [Unsplash](#)

**It's Revolution or Death – Part 1: Short Term Investments**

November 12, 2024

Media collective *subMedia.Tv* in collaboration with Peter Gelderloos presents a new series on increasing threat of climate change.

Just in time for the COP29 summit, where a group of self-congratulatory world leaders will meet in Baku, Azerbaijan for photo-ops, catered meals, and of course discussion of climate goals that they don't intend to meet, subMedia, in collaboration with Peter Gelderloos, is pleased to release part one of a three part series: It's Revolution or Death.

The first installment of the series takes a look at the push for green capitalism, and questions the common-sense assumptions of its cheerleaders. Bolstered by unwavering, uncritical support from NGO's, energy corporations portray themselves as cutting edge innovators in green energy technology while hedging their bets and maintaining diversified portfolios - packed with fossil fuel investments.

The coming two installments will discuss Indigenous and anarchist struggles for land and autonomy and how local communities can get organized to build resiliency in the face of worsening climate catastrophe.

The effects of runaway climate change are already here. If the past 50 years of gas-lighting have made one thing abundantly clear, it's that the politicians and entrepreneurs leading the charge for green energy will never prioritize the interests of life on earth in their pursuit of profits. So what are we going to do about it?

For more of Peter Gelderloos' work check out *They Will Beat the Memory Out of Us* and *The Solutions are Already Here*. Both from [Pluto Books](#) [www.plutobooks.com](https://www.plutobooks.com)

**Final Straw: Resisting Immigration Prison in Tacoma and Fascists in Pittsburgh**

November 12, 2024

Long-running anarchist radio and podcast show *The Final Straw* present two interviews with organizers in Tacoma, WA and Pittsburgh, PA.

First up, you'll hear Maru Mora-Villalpando talking about the immigration prison known as the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA and the organizing that her organization *La Resistencia* does to shut down this private prison run by Geo Group. [00:00:54 - 00:44:00]

Then, a member of Pittsburgh Fash Watch, an antifascist group, talks about their mobilization and unmasking of white supremacists in their area, such as WLM and Goyim Defense League (GDL) chud [Brandon Cahall](#).

photo credit: [350 Tacoma](#)

**Garnet Henderson on Idaho, Abortion, and Christian**



# Nationalism

November 12, 2024

**Interview with Garnet Henderson on the rise of a far-Right and Christian Nationalist currents in Idaho.**

**Garnet** Henderson traveled through scenic, mostly rural, Idaho last year starting in Coeur d'Alene and making her way south. The last leg of the trip brought her through beautiful, chilly, fall in Boise before ending in Twin Falls. Boise now is a lot like it was at that time, but it was a little bit different: Instead of bracing for a right wing primary in Idaho, this year we're bracing for a right wing general election. Unfortunately for Garnet, the trip was less a study of Idaho's beautiful scenery and more a focus on Christian Nationalism, particularly the strain in the Idaho Legislature that is working to inhibit abortion access for Idahoans.

The resultant [article series](#), published at [Rewire](#), is a soaring and sweeping narrative, along with warnings and words of hope, regarding the situation as Garnet experienced it in 2023. Since then, the primary has passed, some legislation has fallen while others have advanced, and we prepare ourselves for the next Christian Nationalism hurdle: the general election next week. Right now, at the one year anniversary of the trip and series, days before the end of the election cycle, it seemed like a good moment to check in with Garnet for some updates. We reached out and spoke to her regarding Idaho, abortion access, Christian Nationalism, and the election.

*What follows is a lightly-edited written interview between me (an individual contributing to BASH) and Garnet Henderson, Senior Multiplatform Reporter at Rewire News Group.*

**BASH:** After a year of settling your thoughts on the trip, can you briefly give an updated description of the experience coming to Idaho? Was there a difference in expectation versus outcome that you can share?

**Garnet Henderson (GH):** I didn't really have specific expectations coming into my trip—my approach as a reporter is to talk to as many people and gather absolutely as much information as possible, so coming in I was really focused on trying to make contact with as many potential interviewees as I could, and the doing the required tetriss to fit all those conversations in. The trip was both short and long in certain respects. Pretty long for a reporting trip in today's media environment where budgets are unfortunately tiny (I couldn't have done it at all without a grant from the [International Women's Media Foundation](#)), but short in that I was never in any one place for more than a few days. Mostly I came away with immense gratitude that so many people were willing to make time to talk with me and connect me to others they thought I should speak with. And I can't lie, a 10-day road trip through Idaho is a pretty good deal, it's a beautiful place.

**BASH:** Some of the things you were looking forward to from the Idaho legislature have come and passed, some have been turned back, as have some of the legislators. I recently saw the update to your article after the primaries, it wasn't all bad news. Can you tell us about those positive and or negative updates and please feel free to include as much or as little national update repro context as well.

**GH:** I think the biggest update is that so many Republican incumbents—15, a nearly unheard-of number, I'd say—[lost their primaries](#). That includes [Scott Herndon](#), one state legislator I focused on quite a bit in my second of three stories. The North Idaho Republicans also seem to be turning the tide against KCRCC and regaining precinct committee seats, which is also impressive. On the repro front, abortion is still banned in Idaho, but the "abortion trafficking" ban is blocked, though the state is seeking to revive it at the Ninth Circuit. There were a number of anti-abortion bills that failed in the state legislature this year, perhaps because Republicans realize they've overplayed their hand, and a few affirmative bills that succeeded and were signed into law, including a requirement that

insurers allow people to get six months of birth control up front and a partial reinstatement of the maternal mortality review committee. That said, the state of Idaho is still arguing it should be allowed to enforce its abortion ban—which has very narrow lifesaving exceptions—in violation of federal law, which requires a broader health exception. The Supreme Court punted on that decision last term but that case will be back on their docket as soon as this year (womp womp).

**BASH:** The repro access conversation seems to have been tucked into the back seat of this election cycle. It's not put on hold by any means, but it's also as uncertain as the election itself, where there are clear battle lines on the matter drawn. Have you been experiencing people navigating access during this time of flux? How do people feel about future access hanging in the balance in this way?


**GH:** Abortion is definitely part of the conversation, as it always is during a presidential election year, and abortion also is literally, directly, on the ballot in 10 states. But I do agree that other repro issues like contraception have hardly been talked about at all in this cycle, with one exception being IVF. In my experience, when abortion or other repro issues are the topic of political conversation, it mostly creates confusion and fear. People aren't sure what's legal, so they don't know what to do, and sometimes they even delay seeking care that they need. It's scary! There's also a national [funding crisis for abortion access](#) at the moment, because the National Abortion Federation and Planned Parenthood—which jointly operate the single largest financial assistance program for abortion—dramatically cut the amount of assistance they're offering over the summer. That has created further confusion and new barriers to access, and people often don't understand what's happening or why.

**BASH:** As I read through this, there were so many voices from so many angles. Knowing a bit about the politics in the scene and that you only had 10 days to navigate it

importance of amplifying the voices of Palestinian prisoners, to bolster our collective movements for their freedom as well as liberation more broadly. Just as we support Indigenous and Black liberation movements on Turtle Island and recognize captured combatants as prisoners of war, Palestinians have every right to fight for self-determination.

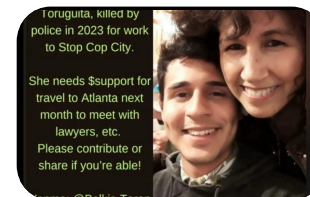
While hundreds of thousands across the globe continue to mobilize to stop the genocide of Palestinians—and continue to take action day after day to confront imperialist complicity in fascism and colonization—our enemies are deploying their bookies to collect on lost profits and find the next leg to break. We know that these sanctions are just one of many attempts, to quell the groundswell rising for the freedom of Palestine and the right to return. We know that these tactics aim to scare us away from supporting resistance movements and freedom fighters, and we know that it never works! It only ignites us. We know that solidarity is a threat, and threat it shall be, because no one is free until all are free.

Until every cage is empty,  
Philadelphia Anarchist Black Cross  
□

 It's Going Down  
@igd\_news@kolektiva.social  
Nov 24

Request for support from Belkis Terán, mother of martyr Tortuguita, killed by police in 2023 for work to Stop Cop City. She needs \$ support for travel to Atlanta next month to meet with lawyers, etc.

Please contribute if share if you're able! Venmo: Belkis-Teran Zelle: belkisteran@hotmail.com



It's Going Down  
@igd\_news@kolektiva.social • Nov 24



"One of our biggest tasks in the current moment, is to get off the internet and discuss with other people how autonomous movements and struggles can organize and connect with people angry about their conditions and disenchanted with established politics."

<https://itsgoingdown.org/dont-doom-scroll-organize-how-to-get-active-in-the-current-terrain/>



Don't Doom Scroll, Organize: How to Get Active in the Current Terrain  
No one knows what is going to happen with the election on November 5th in the US, but what we do know is that both candidates are deeply unp...



It's Going Down  
@igd\_news@kolektiva.social  
Nov 24

"Among often unfriendly political communities increasing in convoluted social allegiances and intellectual abstractions, we want to be in our bodies first and foremost. We believe that physically training together among our varying experiences and capacities offers us something that other, often culturally and racially segregated silos of dance parties, punk shows, or activist events do not. This is not just for the relevance of the skills themselves, but the opportunities for trust-building under stress, and vulnerability through play. We have experienced firsthand how this kind of togetherness is a hugely gratifying and applicable practice, helping to shake off some of the "beautiful loser" mentality that troubles our communities as we fight against the daily horrors this world offers us."

<https://itsgoingdown.org/report-back-from-fight-weekend/>



Combat Sports and Revolution: A Report Back from Fight Weekend in North Carolina  
A report from North Carolina on a recent gathering benefiting anarchist political prisoner Michael Kimble featuring combat sports. Through t...



It's Going Down  
@igd\_news@kolektiva.social  
Nov 21

"As diasporic rebels, our Jewishness teaches us to rely on solidarity beyond all borders. Our teachings compel us to lean on the community of others to live lives worth living, whether we are mourning or celebrating, or grappling time and again with what liberation should and could look like. When we start Shabbat each week—twenty-five hours of practicing "the world to come"—and end it with Havdalah—when we ease ourselves back into this brutal "world as it is"—we do so with braided offerings (bread and a candle, respectively). Such braids, in these times, underscore the imperative for interwovenness, for interrelationality, between each and every one of us, from all walks of life, who want to destroy fascism and bring about liberatory social transformations."

<https://itsgoingdown.org/dont-just-do-nothing-20-things-you-can-do-to-counter-fascism/>



Don't Just Do Nothing: 20 Things You Can Do to Counter Fascism  
Jewish anarchists weigh-in on how people can organize and act in the changing terrain. For a zine PDF, go here. You are not obligated to com...



It's Going Down  
@igd\_news@kolektiva.social  
Nov 20

People hosting community gathering in #Asheville, NC.



“Calling the Democratic Party ‘weak’ is like calling a multinational corporation ‘greedy’: it targets subjective behavior while ignoring the structural reality that underlies it. The Democratic Party was created by Andrew Jackson and his followers as a vehicle to mobilize popular support for white supremacist capitalism, and although the party’s ideology and policies have changed dramatically over the generations, its core mission—its structural role in U.S. society—has remained the same. Since the late 1970s, the party has functioned largely to coopt ‘progressive’ constituencies into supporting kinder, gentler versions of neoliberal policies (or in the case of the Biden administration, Trumpist policies with regard to [China, trade, and immigration](#)). The Democratic Party also bears a major part of the responsibility for the growth of the repressive state apparatus over the past half century, a process that helped pave the way for today’s right-wing authoritarian threat.”

A Democratic victory next month would stave off the worst possible outcome. But unless something seriously changes, this will just be a delaying action.

Photo by [Colin Lloyd](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# Seattle Solidarity Network Launches Campaign Over Unpaid Wages

October 27, 2024

Report from the Seattle Solidarity Network on start of campaign against unpaid wages.

On Sept 22nd, a group of 24 Seattle Solidarity Network members delivered a simple demand to Merchant’s Cafe and Saloon: pay the missing \$200 in tips and \$800 in severance pay to their former worker, Shilo.

Shilo was subjected to a workplace rife with toxic transphobia and was ultimately fired after facing false

accusations in her workplace, such as an “unexcused absence” when she was roofed and violently assaulted after work and missed her next shift. She came to SeaSol for help after this boss fired her and texted her repeatedly blaming her for the sexual assault.

Transphobic Merchant’s owner Darcy Hanson decided on Monday, Sept 30th that her entire business is worth less than this \$1,000 she owes to a low-income worker, and is ready to “have her failing business ruined” by our direct action campaigns. Her AirBnBs above the restaurant will certainly also be affected.

We are all looking forward to fighting such a nasty boss and revealing to all of Seattle the horrible things Darcy has said and done. Pioneer Square deserves better than an unethical owner like Darcy Hanson exploiting workers in the neighborhood. With solidarity, Shilo will get her hard earned money and some justice after this terrible experience.

BOYCOTT MERCHANT’S CAFE AND SALOON! See you soon, Darcy.

## Hands off Samidoun

October 27, 2024

Statement from the Philadelphia Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) in solidarity with Samidoun, a support organization for Palestinian political prisoners. For more background on repressive moves against pro-Palestinian organizations, [see here](#).

Philly ABC extends our solidarity to [Samidoun](#), the Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, in response to the U.S. Department of the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) falsely-premised [sanctions against the organization](#) announced on October 15th. As anarchists and abolitionists attuned to organizing against prisons and policing, we recognize this as the latest attempt to employ the tactic of fabrication to repress powerful social movements. Samidoun affirmed their [commitment](#) to remain

steadfast in the struggle to free Palestinians from the atrocities of colonization and state-sponsored fascism:

As Samidoun Palestinian Prisoner Solidarity Network, we reiterate our support for the Palestinian people, the prisoners and the Palestinian, Arab and Islamic resistance, who are confronting the genocide and occupation on a daily basis. ... Our response to this designation is clear: we will keep struggling to stop the genocide, stop imperialist support for Israel, until the liberation of Palestine from the river to the sea. ... The repression is a sign of strength for the Palestinian movement and the international solidarity movement. This movement has mobilized the largest demonstrations for Palestine in history, has costed Israeli and Zionist companies billions of dollars in losses, it has united millions of people from across the world, and it has united virtually all social movements in every country for the Palestinian liberation struggle. ...We affirm that we shall remain steadfast and committed to the Palestinian people, until victory, return and liberation.

We concur that this repression is a sign of strength. It’s a clear reaction to the surge of global support for resistance movements and efforts to confront Israel’s blatant fascism, in which both the U.S. and Canadian governments are complicit. It’s the type of flailing they do when shit is getting hot; when solidarity is getting real.

In light of their fascist agenda in Palestine, in response to international calls for solidarity, around 400 of us came together in Philly (and remotely) on the 25th anniversary of [#RunningDownTheWalls](#) to support mutual aid in Gaza. Not only does Gaza qualify as the world’s largest open air prison, but every Palestinian held by the Zionist entity can be considered an anti-colonial political prisoner. It was the biggest crowd in the history of RDTW. A comrade from Samidoun spoke about the

(even fewer in Boise): can you talk a bit about what it was like crunching that much Idaho into something worth reading? Arguably, something quite important for reading? The through line and the messaging comes through quite clearly, can you contrast that to the experience itself?

GH: Thank you, I really appreciate that. The downside of the “talk to as many people as possible” approach is that there is then a huge amount of material to sort through on the other side, and painful decisions to make about what to keep and cut. Going in, I knew I wanted to convey what it’s like to live under multiple abortion bans. I also knew that there’s been lots of ink spilled about the American Redoubt stuff and that lots of people vaguely remember that the Aryan Nations had a big compound in North Idaho. What I wanted to make sure to capture is that there’s this longer and broader history of Christian nationalists and white supremacists being attracted to Idaho, but also a history of locals organizing against those people, and that there’s a lot of [organizing happening against them today](#). So I think it was pretty easy to settle on the [first story being about the climate of fear around pregnancy](#), because I encountered that at every turn. And then it was in sorting through all my many notes that the arc of the second two pieces took shape, number two being focused on the [history and present of that political migration](#), and number three being a look at all the [anti-fascist organizing that’s happening now](#). But during the trip, I wasn’t thinking about what would go in which story at all. Just asking as many questions as I could think of.

BASH: A thing that you touched on that was gaining steam was the Open Primaries Initiative, right? It’s safe to say it has steam now and we’re about to see if it makes it into the station. You’ve identified, correctly I think, that this is an important issue on the ballot. Can you touch on it a little bit here? That’s pretty open but I’m looking for why it’s important, what your feelings are about the election where it’s on the ballot, or anything else.

GH: Well, there is a lot of very

understandable voter apathy when it comes to the presidential election. So I think it’s a saving grace of sorts that in so many states, there are important ballot questions like the [Open Primaries Initiative](#) that people can vote on directly. And this certainly seems like a way Idahoans can take direct action to pull their state back from the brink (though I saw this week that Brian Lenney has already threatened an immediate [repeal effort](#) if it succeeds). The excitement about it was palpable when I was in Idaho an entire year ago, so I hope that energy is carrying you all through a pretty bleak season.

BASH: Can you tell us about any recent or upcoming work of yours? Feel free to talk as much or as little about the election as you care to, it seems like a holding your breath moment until after that as far as making repro roadmaps?

GH: I’ve done a lot of reporting on the [Comstock Act](#), which I think is important for people to understand and be aware of because it has emerged as priority number one for the anti-abortion movement. TL;dr they want to use an 1873 anti-vice law written by a man who was deeply ashamed of his own obsessive masturbation to [ban abortion, contraception, and whatever else they might deem “obscene.”](#) There’s also my reporting on the [repro funding crisis](#), and another story I did about some of the [out-there ideas to help people access abortion post-Dobbs](#), looking at which ones succeeded and which failed.

BASH: Any links or resources that you think should be included? Any recommended voices or reading?

GH: [I Need an A-](#) always good to know how to help people find the abortion info and support they need.

*This ends our interview with Garnet Henderson. I would like to thank Garnet for taking the time to give thoughtful and insightful responses. Be sure to check out resources and coverage linked throughout as well as follow her on [social](#) if you are interested in keeping up with her work and repro news.*

Photo by [Zoshua Colah](#) on [Unsplash](#)

# Don’t Doom Scroll, Organize: How to Get Active in the Current Terrain

November 5, 2024

No one knows what is going to happen with the election on November 5th in the US, but what we do know is that [both candidates are deeply unpopular with vast amounts of the population](#). [Republican Donald Trump pushes far-Right conspiracy theories](#), calls for mass deportations, and for the military to shoot protesters. Democrat Kamala Harris continues to support the ongoing war and genocide in Gaza. Neither candidate offers any real solution to growing anger around the rising cost of living, skyrocketing rents, endless wars, militarization of the police, and the unfolding climate crisis which this summer fueled massive wildfires and catastrophic hurricanes. What does seem certain is that if Trump loses, he will contest the election through a variety of means.



If Trump wins, this will kick off a new wave of street action, as communities across the US will mobilize against threats of mass deportations and beyond. If Trump and his supporters go through with their plans to purge the federal government of “disloyal” workers, unions may also call strikes and grind things to a halt. On the other hand, if Harris wins, the Democratic Party will continue to move to the right while a new generation that has been radicalized by the war in Gaza will continue to be disenchanted with the Democratic party, as the fallout from climate change only continues to accelerate.



Readers of *It's Going Down* may have noticed at recent anarchist bookfairs and community events, there is a new generation of people entering autonomous spaces and projects, as people involved in past struggles are also coming back around. While the future, no matter who wins the upcoming election, doesn't look rosy, at the same time there is still a lot of people who are looking for an anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian alternative to the established political order and are searching for concrete ways to get involved in real life action.



In past installments of this column, we've fleshed out ideas about how to go about [forming a group](#) and [promoting events](#), but this time around, we wanted to talk about concrete ideas on starting more long-term projects in your community. While this list isn't exhaustive, we do hope this presents you with some real ideas about how you might *start to begin*.

## Bring People Together to Discuss What Comes Next

One of our biggest tasks in the current moment, is to get off the internet and discuss with other people how autonomous movements and struggles can

organize and connect with people angry about their conditions and disenfranchised with established politics. This could look like:

- Holding meetings with a variety of autonomous community groups and projects.
- Holding public events and discussions about getting organized and meeting our needs directly.
- Organizing conferences and regional gatherings featuring speakers, panels, and workshops.

## Strengthen an Existing Project



Before you go out and take on the world, you might consider working to expand and contribute to an existing organizing project. This might look like:

- If you're city or town has a mutual aid project, see if you can not only volunteer, but *expand* the project. Bottom-line tasks and take on work so that a project can grow.
- Set up a distro or zine table at your local mutual aid program.
- Volunteer to do childcare at your local tenant union meeting, so people with children can remain involved in organizing spaces.
- Take a shift at an autonomous space in your community so it can stay open longer and more often. Take on a project around the space.

## Build Capacity

## Regional



One of the most important things we can do is build up our capacity to organize and take action in our local regions. But in order to do that, we need to build and strengthen our networks. This means cultivating face to face relationships built on trust, sharing resources, and supporting our shared struggles in different locations. This could look like:

- Hosting regional meet-ups, gatherings, and collectively organized events like bookfairs.
- Coordinating to collaborate on various struggles and projects.
- Learning from our different experiences which are informed by different material conditions.
- Working to bridge the divide between rural regions and large cities.
- Seeing what resources and infrastructure we can use as communal resources. Does one city have the ability to print materials while another can put on community events in a space they have access to? Does one group help run a community defense group that can provide security while another can help facilitate a meeting? Organize to see how these various skills can be utilized while helping those without access.

## Mutual Aid



opposition leaders—and was forced to govern in coalition after ten years of single-party governance. That's not how fascist states work.

To be clear, a second Trump presidency would be disastrous. Recognizing and countering that danger is more important than whether we call it fascist or not. And Trump doesn't have to dismantle the US electoral system to wreak massive damage. That "democratic" electoral system, in its various incarnations, has provided the framework for witchhunts and lynchings, roundups of political dissenters, the enslavement of African people and genocide against Indigenous nations. It can be turned to such ends again.

## Rallying Capitalists Against Neoliberalism?

Donald Trump's political relationship with the US ruling class is complicated. Trump was the first billionaire president of the United States and has consistently pushed policies that increase capitalists' wealth and power. Yet 2016 was the first presidential election since 1964 in which big business heavily favored the Democrats. That year, as I have [argued](#),

"Trump's support within the big business community was—for any president and especially a Republican one—unusually limited, fragmented, and unstable. Trump certainly had staunch capitalist supporters such as Peter Thiel, Sheldon Adelson, and Robert and Rebekah Mercer. Yet his capitalist opponents included not just liberals and centrists such as Tom Steyer and Michael Bloomberg but also the billionaire brothers Charles and David Koch, who were notorious backers of right-wing causes but also vocal critics of Trump's positions on immigration and trade. These conflicts belied claims by some liberals and leftists that the administration represented a ruling class consensus-based drive to implement 'neoliberal fascism.'"

In 2016, Trump and his MAGA

supporters advocated a form of nationalist populism embodied in the slogan "America First," which challenged neoliberal orthodoxy on trade and immigration and also called into question the establishment's related consensus around military interventionism and traditional overseas alliances. This ideology won support from various outsider forces within the U.S. ruling class—a capitalist support base for Trump that one team of scholars [described](#) as "extremely unstable":

"It is made up of several layers of investor blocs with little in common other than their intense dislike of existing forms of American government. The world of private equity, intent on gaining access to the gigantic, rapidly growing securities markets of China and the rest of Asia or casinos dependent on licenses for their lucrative businesses in Macau are likely to coexist only fitfully with American industries struggling to cope with world overcapacity in steel and other products or facing twenty-first century mercantilist state targeting."

This instability was compounded within Trump's presidential administration. Because his support base, at both elite and mass levels, was limited and disorganized, Trump was compelled to put together a coalition of America Firsters and conventional conservatives. This resulted in an administration riven by deep conflicts between supporters and opponents of neoliberalism. The administration pushed some policies that neoliberals liked, such as environmental deregulation and tax cuts for corporations and the rich, but also implemented aggressive measures to restrict trade and reduce the number of immigrants, both legal and undocumented. President Trump's foreign policies also reflected a [rug-of-war](#) between aggressive militarists and right-wing anti-interventionists in and around the administration.

I believe this analysis has held up and remains useful for assessing the current situation, although I'm not in a position to bring the analysis up

to date in any sort of systematic way. Trump heavily lost credibility in the business community after January 6th but, with his political comeback in the 2024 presidential race, has largely [regained](#) that ground. Beyond that, there are plenty of anecdotal reports about shifts in how capitalists have been responding to Trump, but it's hard to pick out which of these are more significant. For example, does it matter more that [many billionaires have endorsed Trump](#), or that [almost no Fortune 100 CEOs](#) have done so?

I don't see any indication of a cohesive pro-Trump or pro-MAGA bloc emerging among US capitalists, but I do see indirect signs that the ruling class's neoliberal consensus has continued to weaken over the past eight years. The Biden administration has retained modified versions of Trumpist policies on trade and immigration, while the Heritage Foundation—founded in the 1970s as a key champion of neoliberalism—has [embraced MAGA politics](#) with its Project 2025. Trump and his ideological supporters have both contributed to and benefited from these shifts. In the longer term, the impact and direction of the MAGA movement or its successors will hinge in part on bringing together a more stable capitalist support faction.

## An Impossible Choice

I prefaced these notes by emphasizing the impossible choice posed by the 2024 US presidential election. As I said, a Trump victory in 2024 would be an even worse catastrophe than it would have been in 2020, and yet the other possible outcome, a win for Harris and the Democrats, looks even more abysmal than it did four years ago. The Democrats' preoccupation with wooing Republican support, their refusal to meaningfully address the profound economic and social problems and inequities that fuel populist anger, even their crime against humanity in continuing to fund Israel's genocide, all these reflect strategic choices but also, on a deeper level, the inherent character of the Democratic Party itself. As I [wrote](#) in 2022:



undermines a core principle of the liberal state.

- Over the past few years, Republican-led governments in many states have undertaken a systematic campaign to suppress voting and make control over the electoral system more partisan. In 2022, Political Research Associates warned that “state-level GOP figures—supported by the national leadership—are achieving their goal of making it harder for people to vote, and easier for state legislatures to overturn election outcomes and to strip state courts and professional election officials of their power to expand access to voting and guarantee fair elections.” This campaign has continued.
- Trump’s 2017-2021 administration was chaotic and disorganized, and some of his big initiatives got held up by the courts, bureaucracy, or logistical barriers. A second Trump presidency could be much more effective, given the extensive planning that’s been underway for the past four years on how to translate MAGA ideology into policy and how to reshape the federal bureaucracy to do Trump’s bidding—and the hundreds of judges Trump appointed the first time.
- Millions of Trump supporters are armed. The January 6th attack broke the taboo against deploying masses of violent activists to harass, threaten, and disrupt the workings of government. Despite the Biden administration’s crackdown on January 6 participants, it’s likely that MAGA forces will build on this precedent.

## Expanding Fascistic Tendencies

Donald Trump has been called a fascist since the early days of his presidential candidacy for 2016. Over the past nine years I have repeatedly argued against this description, while noting that both his campaigns and his administration had important fascist tendencies. But I’ve also

argued that we need to treat the question dynamically, being alert to both changes in Trump’s politics and the interplay between his politics and other forces.

Fascism is a category we impose on political phenomena to help make sense of them. The question isn’t whether a given conception of fascism is “true,” but whether it’s more or less useful, both analytically and strategically, for understanding political connections and differences. A three way fight approach argues that it’s most useful to think of fascism as an autonomous political force that makes a radical break with the established order, intensifying existing hierarchies in many ways but also challenging established elites for power. Three way fight politics also warns that there is nothing inherently fascist about dictatorship, racial oppression, or even genocide, and that even *anti-fascism* can be used to advance political repression against liberatory forces.

Trump has promoted many elements of fascist politics, such as political demonization, supremacist attacks on oppressed groups, authoritarianism, and a distorted kind of anti-elitism based on conspiracist scapegoating. As noted above, he also cultivated a symbiotic relationship with organized fascists and other far rightists. But some key pieces of fascist politics were always missing. Trump didn’t offer an ideological vision to systematically transform society, he didn’t try to build an independent organizational base, and he didn’t challenge the legitimacy of the established political system—at least for a while.

The changes I outlined in the previous sections above have brought the MAGA movement significantly closer to fascist politics, although important differences are still there. Trump and his supporters have brought a kind of system disloyalty into mainstream politics in a way we didn’t see in 2016, and have intensified the shifts toward authoritarianism and supremacist scapegoating. MAGA forces haven’t built a new, unified mass

organization, but they’ve spent the past eight years developing an extensive, if loose political network, and they’ve gained much tighter control of the Republican Party than they ever had before, at least temporarily. Initiatives such as the Heritage Foundation’s Project 2025 have helped flesh out an overall ideological vision for the movement. And having tried once already to overturn the results of a presidential election by force, MAGA forces can be expected to do so again if they don’t win outright, as in 2020-21 using some combination of propaganda, bogus legal challenges, and physical attacks to discredit and challenge the election—but this time in a more organized and systematic way.

These developments mean that Trump’s presidential bid is even more dangerous than it was four years ago. At the same time, in my view they don’t represent fascism’s full-scale, radical break with the established order. Fascism aims to impose a unified ideological vision on all spheres of society, from politics to the workplace, from mass media to family life. This goes far beyond the kind of policy prescriptions we see in Project 2025. Some of the forces that support Trump, such as the powerful New Apostolic Reformation network, have that kind of comprehensive vision, but they don’t control the MAGA movement as a whole—witness Trump’s retreat from staunch opposition to abortion rights to a “let the states decide” position.

The MAGA movement is part of a new international wave of right-wing populist initiatives that have surged over the past two decades and especially since the 2008 global economic crisis. These initiatives have a lot of fascist features, notably authoritarianism, aggressive nationalism, and ethnic or religious scapegoating. In power, they carry out supremacist policies and intensify repression, but they work within the existing governmental framework in a way that limits their power to some degree. For example, Poland’s Law and Justice Party was voted out of office in 2023, while India’s Bharatiya Janata Party lost parliamentary seats in 2024—despite jailing or threatening many

Mutual aid projects have long been a part of autonomous movements and in the wake of the pandemic in 2020, they exploded across the social terrain. Mutual aid projects are powerful because they meet real needs in our communities, bring people together to build infrastructure, and also help build connections in our communities. Here are some examples of mutual aid projects you may consider starting up:

- **Really Really Free Market:** A practice in gift economy, Really Really Free Markets are spaces where people bring together items they want to give away and take things that they need from other donations. Check out this guide from CrimethInc. here.



- **Food Not Bombs:** Food Not Bombs collectives give out food for free in public spaces, often pushing back against laws targeting the poor and houseless. Go here for more info.



- **Survival programs:** Some autonomous groups have organized a wide variety of mutual aid programs to meet specific needs in their communities. In Atlanta, Food 4 Life helps run an autonomous grocery program. In Washington DC, the

Remora House has a mobile distro that supports houseless people. Other examples include collectives supporting harm reduction programs, distributing masks and other PPE, community free fridges, and access to reproductive healthcare.



- **Mutual Aid Disaster Relief:** MADR is a network that is providing autonomous mutual aid and disaster relief in communities hit by hurricanes, wildfires, and beyond. Check out their website and Instagram for concrete examples of this work in action. Some cities also have mutual aid hubs in impacted areas.



## Zine Distros and Counter-Info



Distributing literature and setting up counter-info infrastructure is central to bringing people into autonomous movements and struggles. Across the world, there are many autonomous spaces and community centers, sometimes referred to as infoshops, where people can pick up zines and other

publications. Often times however, people create mobile forms of literature distribution, sometimes called “distros” for short. These distros table at community events, mutual aid programs, concerts, and out in the general public. Here’s some tips to get started:

- Check out what publishers like CrimethInc., AK Press, and PM Press have up for offer online. Consider ordering materials to table with. Projects like Municipal Adhesives also sell cheap stickers. Sites like Spout Distro, Semo Distro, 1312 Press, It’s Going Down, Ill Will, and CrimethInc. all have a lot of zines to check out and print.
- If you don’t have access to a printer, consider fundraising to buy one. Some groups sign up for a service that supplies toner and repair machines for low cost. Having access to this infrastructure is key to being able to print out zines, flyers, and other outreach materials.
- Think about where you can table in your community, what events and spaces would benefit from having a distro, and where setting up a table with zines and other materials might be a great way to meet other people and connect. Check out some examples of active distros like Approaching Storm Distro, Pyrophite Distro, Space City Anarchists, Friends Print Collective, Fugitive Distro, and Brittle Bush Distro to get some ideas.
- Consider setting up some sort of counter-info website, social media hub, or publication.

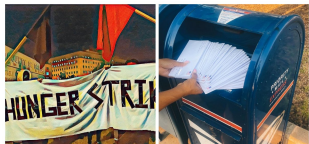
## Anti-Repression and Community Defense



Grassroots social movements face repression. Just look at how the State has attacked the labor

movement, the Black Panthers, and currently is attempting to smother the struggle against Cop City in a flood of RICO charges. Both parties are also gearing up to railroad the anti-war movement in support of Palestine. Counter-insurgency and police militarization is a deadly reality in the United States and we also face continued threats from the far-Right. With this in mind, we need to build our capacity to keep ourselves safe and also support those targeted by repression. Here are some ideas about how we could organize to do just that:

- **Organize a Letter-Writing Night:** One of the easiest things we can do is support prisoners on the inside. Organize a regular letter-writing night to connect with and support prisoners on the inside. If someone is located near you, visit them. Support family and friends of a prisoner. Fund-raise to donate to their commissary and help them when they get out. Check out groups like the Anarchist Black Cross (ABC) for groups that are doing direct support.



- **Form an Abolitionist Mutual Aid Program:** Organize a mutual aid program for those coming out of jails and detention centers. Support ongoing organizing happening on the inside of the prison walls. For examples check out Oakland Abolition and Solidarity, Florida Prisoner Solidarity, SoCal FTP, and Barton Prisoner Solidarity Project. Organizations like the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee (IWOC) and Jailhouse Lawyers Speaker (JLS) also support prisoners organizing on the inside.



- **Support Bail Funds and Anti-Repression Groups:** Support bail funds which help those targeted by state repression. For examples, check out Bay Area Anti-Repression Committee and Puget Sound Prisoner Support.
- **Build a Culture in Support of Prisoners:** Organize in support of political prisoners on days of action like June 11th July 25th, Running Down the Walls, and beyond.

- **Organize for Community Self-Defense:** The more that we are able to keep ourselves safe, the better off we will be. There's lots of examples of increasing our capacity to defend our movements and spaces; these can look like groups which put on self-defense classes, support access to reproductive healthcare, and organizations such as the John Brown Gun Club and Socialist Rifle Association (SRA) which teach people firearms safety.

## Cross-Pollinate and Support Autonomous Projects

If Trump wins or is successful in stealing the election, a new wave of street action is likely to kick off. At the same time, Trump has made attacking protesters a central part of his political brand and both parties have pushed for attacks on the movement in solidarity with Palestine. A Harris victory may also lead to many on the Left being

lulled into inaction, much like Biden's victory in 2020 did. How organized we are and what infrastructure we have in place will determine our ability to mobilize and build in the coming terrain, regardless of who is in power.

We don't have to do *everything*, but getting organized in our communities, building up regional capacity and autonomous mutual aid, infrastructure, counter-media, and our ability to keep ourselves safe, is central to autonomous movements and struggles being able to grow and expand.

## Final Straw: Out-Organizing Antisemitism with Ben Lorber and Shane Burley

November 4, 2024

Long-running anarchist radio show and podcast *The Final Straws* speaks with Ben Lorber and Shane Burley.

A recent conversation we had with the Ben Lorber and Shane Burley, co-authors of the recently published book, Safety Through Solidarity: A Radical Guide to Fighting Antisemitism.

For the hour we discuss the roots of antisemitism in the West, pushing back on Zionism in the midst of the genocidal war on Palestinians, a rebirth of Bundism and addressing antisemitism in left spaces. I definitely recommend this book to folks and hope you enjoy the chat! And as always, thanks for supporting this project.

### Past interviews with Shane:

- Fascism Today
- Why We Fight

## In Contempt #46: Heritage Foundation Pushes for Repression of

some tentative reflections on how Trump and the MAGA movement have evolved and what they can tell us about the US political system today. One way or another, whoever wins the presidency, these developments will be unavoidable in the years ahead.

## Eroding the Divide between Far-Right and Mainstream Right

A key element of Donald Trump's presidential career has been his symbiotic relationship with the U.S. far right, by which I mean those rightists who reject the legitimacy of the existing political system. This relationship has been unprecedented for any US president (or any major party presidential candidate), but it has also been complex, unstable, and continually in flux. In 2016, the relationship centered on the alt-right, whose online attacks on Trump's opponents—both Republican and Democrat—helped put him in the White House, and were repaid by big boosts in visibility and recognition for the alt-right and its goals. But in 2017, many alt-rightists soured on what they saw as Trump's cooptation by the conservative establishment, and their movement itself collapsed from a combination of infighting and antifascist countermobilization.

In 2020, Trump's relationship with the far right centered more on the Patriot movement, which that year spearheaded a series of protests against COVID "lockdowns" and a wave of violent attacks against Black Lives Matter protesters. Although largely rejecting federal government authority, and with a history of killing cops, Patriot activists embraced President Trump and his efforts to expand the federal government's repressive apparatus, which they rationalized as defense of a populist upsurge against sinister elites. In return, Trump's fearmongering helped validate Patriot groups' conspiracism and base-building efforts.

After the 2020 presidential election, Trump's false claims of widespread voter fraud inspired the "Stop the

Steal" campaign and the January 6 attack on the US Capitol, an insurgent attempt by Trump supporters to overturn the election results by force. These efforts led tens of millions of Americans to reject the validity of the voting process, which is supposed to be the foundation for the whole US system of government.

In 2024, the far right as an independent, active force is in a relative lull, partly because of the Biden administration's crackdown against January 6th attackers and partly because of cooptation by Trump and the MAGA movement. The creative tension of past years between the far right and mainstream right has, for now, largely been replaced by a new dynamic of bringing key elements of far right politics into the Republican Party itself.

MAGA forces have continued the decades-old incremental process of shifting the Overton Window rightward by taking supremacist attacks on immigrants, trans people, and other oppressed groups that were pioneered by far rightists—as well as conspiracy theories such as the white supremacist "Great Replacement"—and making them more and more acceptable and integral to mainstream politics.

The Republicans' embrace of election denialism, however, represents a qualitative shift. Many Republican leaders initially denounced the January 6th attack on the Capitol but later reversed themselves, and Republican leaders are now expected, if not required, to endorse claims that the 2020 election was stolen. Voter fraud claims have tended to spread, undermining the legitimacy of any national, state, or local election that doesn't go the way rightists want. The party's platform has also shifted dramatically: while the 2016 platform was standard fare conservatism, the 2024 version echoes Trump's America First rhetoric about rescuing a nation in "SERIOUS DECLINE" from the evils of globalism and a migrant "invasion."

These changes haven't turned the Republican Party into an insurgent organization, but the party appears

ready, at least for now, to set aside the established institutional framework for the sake of personal loyalty to a charismatic leader with dictatorial tendencies. At the same time, by refashioning the Republican Party in his own MAGA image, Trump has encouraged many far rightists to give him another chance, discouraging them from independent actions that might conflict with his political project and effectively corralling them once again into a kind of contingent system loyalty.

## Laying the Groundwork for the Authoritarian Rule

Donald Trump has a long history of admiring figures like Viktor Orbán and Xi Jinping. Lately Trump's dictatorial ambitions have gotten more blatant, as in his comment about being a dictator on day one in the White House and his frequent threats to use the state apparatus to punish political enemies. Having millions of people accept and applaud this outlook has helped legitimize authoritarianism in US political culture.

Rhetoric aside, there are several reasons to think a second Trump presidency is likely to be significantly more authoritarian than the first one:

- As part of his comeback bid, Trump and his followers have seized control of the Republican Party more tightly and systematically than ever before. Trump has bent Congressional Republicans to his will, packed the party's organizational leadership with his own loyalists, and scrapped the traditional program-writing process to impose a new party program by fiat. Party staff members have been subjected to loyalty tests, even at the cost of organizational capacity.
- The Supreme Court's 2024 decision that presidents have broad immunity from prosecution for "official acts" dramatically weakens institutional checks on presidential power and



manufacturing, and halting the machinery of genocide will have immediate impacts. New conditions demand new tactics, and we need to continually re-examine them on this shifting terrain.

### 3. Erode the bedrock of fascism

The sharpest edges of fascist movements are aimed at Black, Latine, Indigenous, and Asian people, along with immigrants and those of oppressed genders and sexualities. Successful organizing efforts will be rooted in the lived experiences and communities they belong to. Through popular education we can channel public disaffection away from scapegoats and to the real villains: the ruling class of capitalists and the state. Anarchists are uniquely well-positioned to speak to popular disaffection in a way that liberals and conservatives cannot. We need to engage with potential supporters of the right by speaking plainly and convincingly of the necessity of liberatory struggle.

The lifeblood of fascism is the petty bourgeoisie: small and medium-sized business owners (landlords, restaurants, franchises, car dealerships, retail, general contractors, etc.). Just as we must organize our own class, we should seize opportunities to disorganize theirs, particularly individuals and companies most politically active. Deny them their profits and prestige: engage in coordinated opposition, making them toxic to clients, customers, business partners, and local politicians. Encourage worker unionization of their workplaces, and tenant unionization of their rental holdings. Undermine and disrupt local and state chambers of commerce through public opposition campaigns.

If the petty bourgeoisie are fascism's lifeblood, the police are its muscle, and we should strengthen popular anti-police sentiment. The last four years shows that our capacity to demoralize them is potent. Revitalize cop watch efforts linked to and under the umbrella of larger mass-level organizations, like tenant or worker unions or neighborhood assemblies. Research

and organize to oppose the many [Cop City-like projects](#) and [new prison construction](#) that may be springing up near you. Even failed opposition campaigns, when done well, grow anti-police sentiment in a long-lasting way. Build a steady drumbeat of anti-police outreach, including: exposing police officers' extremist views, highlighting abusive officer conduct, holding film screenings, town halls, and other public events on police violence, and disrupting police recruitment and training events.

## Their Dilemmas, Our Opportunities

While US political culture and corporate media is focused on national-level politics, we shouldn't miss the trees for the forest. Organizers should tailor their activity to capitalize on the context around them. To that end, in addition to the nationwide [conjunctural analysis](#) and [strategy](#) that Black Rose members create, each chapter creates its own versions that examine the local political, economic, and social circumstances in which it operates to determine where organizing efforts should be focused.

As the adage goes, generals always prepare to fight the previous war. Revolutionaries, too, often prepare to fight the previous revolution. We must not fall into that trap. We need to better understand the strengths and flaws of the ruling class — and of our own — not as they were, but as they are.

We can use the problems of the present to create offensive campaigns that both win lasting change and empower us, rather than being constantly stuck on the back foot. Whether it is Trump or Harris in the White House, the horizon we walk toward remains the same, even if the path may change with the terrain.

Imagine the next moment of rupture, revolt, and possibility that will come in the months and years ahead. What will you think back and wish you were doing right now with your coworkers, neighbors, and friends to prepare? What's

stopping you?

Let's build a new way forward, and a better future together in struggle.

## Three Way Fight Analysis of Trump and the 2024 Election

October 28, 2024

An analysis from *Three Way Fight* on the state of the MAGA movement in 2024 and how it has changed since the 2016 election cycle.

By Matthew N. Lyons

In 2020 I [described](#) the US presidential race between Joe Biden and Donald Trump as a choice not between a lesser evil and a greater evil, but between the abysmal and the catastrophic. This year, with Kamala Harris versus Trump, we get to choose between a Democratic option more abysmal than four years ago and a Republican option even more catastrophic than last time. On one side, Trump has amped up the supremacist lies, calls to violence, and nakedly dictatorial fantasies to unprecedented levels, while the MAGA forces behind him have been working diligently to make an effective, organized authoritarianism much more likely this time around. On the other side, Harris seems intent on embracing Republican positions on everything except abortion rights, while remaining committed to funding Israel's ever-intensifying genocide in Gaza and beyond.

US presidential elections have always been a caricature of democracy, but this is the most appalling no-win "choice" US voters have faced in my lifetime, maybe ever. Yet both major party options reflect systemic developments stretching back decades—two sides of a trend that has made the disconnect between political system and basic human decency more and more obvious.

In the notes that follow I want to look at the Trump side of this contest. Drawing on my writings over the past nine years, I offer

## Anti-War Movement, Arrests Follow Raids on Fur Farm

November 3, 2024

In this column, we present our monthly roundup of political prisoner, prison rebel, and repression news, happenings, announcements, action and analysis. Packed in as always are updates, fundraisers, and birthdays.

There's a lot happening, so let's dive right in!

## Repression Continues Against the Palestine Solidarity Movement

One year into the ongoing genocide, October 2024 saw a major escalation in state repression against the Palestine solidarity movement, as the US and Canadian governments launched a joint crackdown against the prisoner solidarity group Samidoun. [IGD contributor Scott Campbell has written an analysis of this repression](#), and [you can read Samidoun's own statement of defiance here](#). [Unity of Fields](#), a counter-info project targeted with threats from the state, have published [their own guide to understanding repression and counter-repression](#).

As [Scott Campbell](#) wrote:

According to [The New York Times](#), just last semester more than 3,100 people were arrested on 73 campuses across the U.S. While the state attempts to frame the Palestine solidarity movement as violent (despite [evidence](#) to the contrary), the real violence has emerged from law enforcement and the far-Right. Harkening back to the police-facilitated far-Right street violence against antifascists several years ago, there has also been violence by Zionists, [most notably at UCLA](#), where a far-Right mob [attacked](#) the Gaza solidarity encampment for hours

as police watched. And the state and its allies in the universities have only [ramped up](#) for more repression this fall.

Whether it be through the [purchase](#) of drones and less-lethal weaponry, the creation of [new policies](#) designed to stifle student expression, [firing](#) tenured professors, or [deeming](#) Zionists a "protected class," the overall pattern, as [summarized](#) by Palestine Legal, is that "these policies have ultimately consolidated administrative and state power while undermining freedom of expression, the right to assembly and protest, academic freedom, and safety for students and faculty on campuses across the country." As this article was being put together, [pro-Palestine organizers in Philadelphia at Penn State had their home raided by armed police](#) who made no arrests. This follows the university banning Penn Students Against the Occupation back in April. Combined with statements from Donald Trump that he'll deport [radicals and protesting students](#), or attention seekers like Republican Senator Tom Cotton [calling](#) for protesters to be thrown off bridges, there is a perfect storm of hate, fear, ignorance, repression, fascism, and genocide.

This moment has also seen the ongoing weaponization of anti-Semitism. Rather than deal with the very real threat and severity of anti-Semitism in the United States, what can be seen is a continuation of Trump-era [policies](#), where as president he embraced the anti-Semitic far-Right while deploying his administration, notably under the [tenure](#) of Department of Education Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Kenneth Marcus, to crack down on speech critical of Israel in the name of fighting anti-Semitism. Recently, the Heritage Foundation, author of Project 2025, released "Project Esther," which [calls](#) for the government to go after anti-Zionists in the name of combating anti-Semitism. The report claims groups such as Jewish Voice for Peace and

Students for Justice in Palestine form an elaborate " Hamas Support Network" and should be targeted using counter-terrorism, immigration, and RICO laws. On Palestine, the state, the university "liberal elite," and the reactionary far-Right all speak in one voice: Question the genocidal settler-colonial status quo, and we'll come for you.

At the same time, local [repressive operations continue to target Palestine solidarity campaigners](#) across a number of cities. For one example of this, [Kit O'Connell recently published an extensive report on police attacks on Palestine solidarity activists at Austin Pride](#). Student protesters at the University of Minneapolis have also released [a statement about the FBI harassment they've faced following a building occupation](#).

The Heritage Foundation, one of the key architects of Project 2025, is now pushing for sweeping attacks against the anti-war movement. [From one report:](#)

The 10,000-word "Project Esther: A National Strategy to Combat Antisemitism" targets what it calls the " Hamas Support Network" (HSN), made up of groups that the document claims are "decidedly antisemitic, anti-Israel, and anti-American" and "involved in furthering Hamas's cause in contravention of American values and to the detriment of American citizens and America's national security interests."

The network, the project says, revolves around [American Muslims for Palestine](#) (AMP) with "action arms" comprised of what the project falsely claims are " Hamas Support Organizations" (HSOs), including [Jewish Voice for Peace](#) and [Students for Justice in Palestine](#), that recruit members, spread propaganda, and conduct rallies with the support of "a coalition of leftist, progressive organizations" such as the Open Society Foundations and Tides Foundation.

Project Esther equates anti-Zionism and criticism of Israel to antisemitism, and, moreover,

anti-Americanism. It casts millions of Americans opposed to Israel's violence in Palestine - and US support of it - as opportunistic, foreign-funded, and inauthentic. The authors claim that groups "pounced" on Hamas' attack on Oct. 7, "intending to use it as a George Floyd-style event to spring onto center stage and grab a giant microphone."

To fulfill their goals, the authors envision using financial and academic audits, "name and shame" campaigns, and "lawfare" - including utilizing the Foreign Agents Registration Act ([FARA](#)) and, astonishingly, the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act ([RICO](#)), as well as counterterrorism, hate speech, and immigration laws. They also seek to disrupt communications between and among the targeted groups and monitor their social networks.

For a further look, check out [this report in Drop Site News](#).

## Political Prisoner News

[New greeting cards from Native anarchist political prisoner Oso Blanco are now available as a fundraiser for the Children's Art Project](#). The [2025 Certain Days Freedom for Political Prisoners calendar](#) is also now available for sale.

The Rattling the Cages series of talks bringing together former political prisoners continues, and the most recent event, on post-prison activism and archiving resistance with Eric King, Jake Conroy, and Claude Marks, is now [available to watch here](#):



The next event, Until All Are Free,

will feature Eric in conversation with Jason and Jeremy Hammond on November 9th. [You can register to watch here](#). On November 23rd, there'll be [another event on Revolutionary Women Behind Bars](#), with former political prisoners Nicole Kissane, Linda Evans and Laura Whitehorn.

The *Final Straw Radio* show recently broadcast a discussion with Eric King, Jake Conroy and Josh Davidson. Eric King was also recently interviewed by the *Non Serviam* podcast, and [you can listen to that interview here](#).

Former Panther 21 defendant and BPP/BLA political prisoner [Doruba Bin-Wahad is fundraising for his medical expenses after being diagnosed with lung cancer](#).



Leonard Peltier hospitalized

Monday October 28, 2024 Leonard Peltier was hospitalized. It is reported that Leonard Peltier needs an emergency medical transfer to a facility with a FICU bed. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern.

Thank you to all who have supported Leonard Peltier's medical needs. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern.

Respect your rights. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern.

For more information, please contact the Leonard Peltier Official Ad Hoc Committee. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern. Leonard Peltier's medical condition is a topic of ongoing concern.

[Long-term Native political prisoner Leonard Peltier has just been hospitalized](#), and supporters are demanding an immediate transfer to a facility that can provide more appropriate medical care.

[Antifascist prisoner Jesse "Tall Can" Cannon has been moved](#), his new address is:

Jesse Cannon BX4822  
Konoti #27  
13044 State Hwy 29  
Lower Lake, CA 95457

## Uprising Defendants and Ongoing Cases

[John Wade, a George Floyd uprising defendant from Georgia who had been released, has now](#)

[been re-arrested](#). You can [donate to his post-release funds here](#), and write to him at:

John Wade #1003510744  
PO Box 3877  
Jackson, GA 30233

Supporters report that "John's condition has greatly worsened since re-arrest. With a growing list of acts of political retaliation, including guards denying John medication and water, threatening him and calling him slurs, the carceral system has been working hard to disappear our friend. Currently he is being held at Jackson State Prison, one of Georgia's diagnostic class prisons which are notoriously cruel and violent. We are being told that he can't make calls, have visitation, or receive commissary (a lifeline for people in prison) for several weeks. They have intentionally buried him away in a prison where we cannot check on him or make sure he is okay. What we need right now is for folks to do everything in their power to shed light on this series of events."

Meanwhile, [Hibachi LeMar, an anarchist prisoner due for release from the Illinois state system, has now been transferred to Pennsylvania on a warrant for an alleged parole violation](#).

You can continue to write Hybachi [using this form](#) or by sending a single sided letter to this forwarding address:

Hybachi LeMar  
c/o Midwest Books to Prisoners  
1321 N Milwaukee Avenue PMB 460  
Chicago, IL 60622

Hybachi's support crew have also recently posted a series of audio messages from him, covering subjects including [zines as resistance](#), [reading while squatting](#), [what it means to be different](#) and [the life of Ukrainian anarchist revolutionary Maria Nikofoforova](#).

toll rises and public anger increases, Gaza will continue to put politicians in a bind. Republican politicians are opting for a quick and decisive military victory, with Trump calling for Israel to "get it over with" and promising to clamp down on protests. Many Democrats in office would prefer a return to low level conflict that would move off the front pages of the newspaper but allow Israel to continue its process of ethnic cleansing and occupation. Joe Biden and Kamala Harris have clearly signaled that aside from a few wagged fingers over humanitarian aid, they are firmly with Israel's ever-expanding war to the bitter end. Zionist groups and defense industry interests fund campaigns to oust pro-Palestinian politicians such as Cori Bush, who lost her primary race thanks to tens of millions of dollars spent by the pro-Israel group AIPAC. Neither party can let go of Israel because it is the centerpiece of US military and foreign policy in the region.

Another major issue this cycle is, once again, immigration, where the Democrats have lurched to the right, adopting much of the Republican platform as their own. Dropping their opposition to Trump's harsh anti-immigrant border policies, in June 2024 the Biden administration issued an executive order that can shut down the border, suspended asylum protections, and allowed for immediate deportations. A panicked center will adopt the policies of the right if they think it will help them stay in power. But as Democrats and their counterparts in Europe have found out over the past decade, moving rightward on immigration will not end the electoral threat of the far right.

Democrats are trying to make protecting abortion rights their centerpiece campaign issue. The 2022 *Dobbs* decision ended what few abortion rights remained in *Roe v. Wade* and consigned reproductive rights to a patchwork of wildly different state laws. For many in conservative-governed states, striking down *Roe* only codified what was already for all practical purposes a total abortion ban. Attacks on bodily autonomy, like abortion and trans healthcare,

a [rejoint endeavors of heteropatriarchy and capitalism](#) as they demand harsher control of social reproduction. However, abortion bans are wildly unpopular with the general public. Harris has, true to form, embraced the [bare minimum](#) promises needed to attempt to keep the rallying cry potent. Trump, after initially crowing over *Dobbs* and state-level abortion bans, has tried to [downplay](#) them as the general election approaches: the Republican National Committee even [removed](#) a federal abortion ban from its platform for the first time in forty years. Regardless of the election's outcome, neither party will have the kind of Congressional majority to actually settle the issue even if they wanted to. And democrats, when they held the majority in Congress, took no action on abortion. Like the pre-*Dobbs* dynamic, most politicians are in practice happy to keep the controversy alive, all the better for fundraising and mobilizing their base while the rest of us pay the price.

These crises are not going away anytime soon. They are part of a cascade of social crises. US ruling interests cannot address them within the current frameworks of capitalist democracy and imperial interests that they represent. These crises will continue to afflict us until we can radically break out of this dynamic.

## What Can Be Done: Outside and Against

Given present circumstances, we see debate on whether or not one should vote as a distraction, generating much heat but very little light. Those on the anti-capitalist left should not provide time, energy, or money to electoral candidates. Popular power lies outside the state, and it includes the power to impact and influence the state. We should work to develop and build that power by organizing and acting collectively. Beyond the importance of [organizing](#) at your workplace, apartment building, and neighborhood, here are five avenues of action for the present moment that are much more worthy of our

time than canvassing for candidates.

### 1. Organize with migrant workers and disrupt anti-immigrant repression

We can defend migrant workers and disrupt repression. We can build unions and union-like formations in sectors with a high proportion of immigrant and undocumented workers (e.g. farms, light manufacturing, food service, gig work). These organizations, and solidarity networks, workers groups, labor centers and others should be formed and strengthened. For immigrant-heavy neighborhoods, ICE watch and rapid response groups should be built, with members undergoing regular operational and information security trainings to prepare them. These groups are necessary now and will remain so under either Harris or Trump. The social and physical infrastructure of border enforcement, detention, and deportation are obvious and everywhere, even far from the border. Direct actions during the first Trump term provide numerous examples of how to slow their gears

### 2. Heighten the cost of the genocide in Gaza

In the case of Gaza, we can raise the cost of inaction on the part of institutions at all levels by organizing and radicalizing alongside the people within them. This way we can fracture the Zionist consensus within the political class. We can organize for the campus occupations, the BDS campaign, Palestinian resistance groups like [Workers in Palestine](#), and other immediate efforts. Importantly, we can continue to shift the rhetorical climate from the minimum demand ("ceasefire now") to opposing Israeli apartheid and Zionism more generally.

Taking the struggle for justice in Palestine directly to the institutions that support the genocide is exactly what we mean by an "outside and against" strategy. Frequent marches and rallies are good entry points for the newly politicized, but their exclusive use diverts energy and resources from more difficult but effective tactics. Blocking arms shipments, disrupting weapons



who can swim?

## The Ballot Box or Popular Power: Which Way Forward?

October 28, 2024

Analysis from the Black Rose Anarchist Federation about the terrain in the US surrounding the upcoming election.

*This article by Black Rose / Rosa Negra members Frank Ascaso and Patrick Berkman takes stock of the present conjuncture around the 2024 presidential election. The “choice” before us, is no choice at all: between a program of unadorned reaction and that of friendly faced genocide. But despair and retreat aren’t adequate in the case of either outcome. As the authors argue, we must get organized to confront whatever political forces take control of the state. This article contains perspectives of individual members of Black Rose/Rosa Negra and does not necessarily reflect the view of the entire Federation.*

By Frank Ascaso and Patrick Berkman

With the surprise entrance of Vice President Kamala Harris as the Democratic Party’s presidential candidate, the character, but not the nature, of the 2024 election cycle dramatically changed. Progressive activists immediately started volunteering for her campaign, spurred not by any substantive shift in policy — Harris has pledged to carry on Biden’s pro-Israel and anti-immigrant agenda — but by the simple fact that the candidate wasn’t Biden. As well, Harris has broken all previous fundraising records for amounts raised in a single quarter, a success owed largely to [business interests](#) and [Silicon Valley](#). However, the months since her ascension have shown a steady re-consolidation of support for Trump in key states. The outcome of the election remains too close to predict.

The dead heat of this race is, in part, due to this election cycle offering the choice between the

party of genocide and the party of fascism. This is no choice at all. It is part of the formula that has led to our worsening social crisis. For decades we have faced exactly this same calculus at the ballot box: choose the lesser evil candidate to stave off much worse outcomes for working and oppressed peoples. And yet, conditions continue to worsen each cycle. This is a process that has been slowly moving all of us toward fascism, climate crisis, and genocide. Working within these options does not change that trajectory. Only by working outside and against them can we alter our course.

To break free from this cycle rather than focus on elections, we suggest using an ecosystem model to better understand political struggle and organizing. In election years, progressive groups urgently call for activists to work for Democratic candidates. However, it’s important to remember that groups engaging in political work are not a monolith: we are part of an ecosystem of different social actors with different orientations. While liberals, progressives, and allied forces work to elect and influence politicians, those of us on the anticapitalist left should build popular power. By building independent, disruptive organizations of the working class, popular power can not only force concessions from the ruling class in the present, but also carry the potential to overthrow capitalism and the state in its entirety. Key to its revolutionary potential is its operation outside and against the existing structures of social and political domination. Understanding our place within the larger ecosystem refocuses our efforts on class struggle outside of the electoral arena, while progressive formations will continue to work for politicians. They have a candidate to elect. We have popular power to build.

To be clear, socialism isn’t measured by how far to the left our politicians are; nor is our proximity to fascism measured by how far to the right they are. Fascism has taken over nations after both left-wing and right-wing elections: what matters most is the people’s ability to organize themselves and fight for

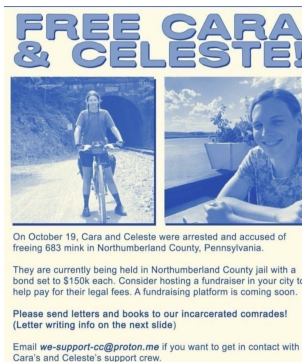
something better. Whoever wins the election in November, our focus should remain on the forms of popular organization we build together.

## Amid Compounding Crises, a Political Impasse

The ruling classes in the United States and other western powers continue to face an acute crisis of legitimacy, with major social institutions failing to meet the most basic needs of working people, be it housing, climate, labor, health, cost of living, or a slew of other issues. More importantly, the horror of the US-backed genocide in Gaza and now Lebanon, as well as the blatant criminality of the Supreme Court and other major governing institutions, have intensified this crisis of legitimacy.

In this election, different sectors of the ruling class are fighting among themselves over how to best manage and navigate the crisis. The Democrats are further solidifying their role as the party of status quo capital, with major corporate and billionaire donors from tech, finance, Hollywood, and manufacturing supporting the Harris candidacy. Those of a more social-democratic leaning are boxed out by the party bureaucracy on one side and a hostile donor base on the other. Meanwhile, on the right, there is another set of ruling class interests, particularly in [fossil fuels](#), [tech](#), and [finance](#), who are comfortable with the Trump movement’s use of political violence, criminality, graft, and continued tax and regulatory gifts to big business. The profits made during his administration have convinced them that whatever kind of threat he poses, it’s not a threat to their interests. Many of Trump’s financial backers — and hard core volunteer supporters — come from small-time capitalists, members of the petty bourgeoisie like car dealers and internet based commercial retailers.

The US-supported genocide in Gaza and its spread to Lebanon has intensified this crisis of legitimacy and political impasse. As the death



[The North American Animal Liberation Press Office is organizing to support two people who have been arrested in Pennsylvania in connection with an alleged action at a mink farm.](#)

The address for Caleb Freestone, who was recently imprisoned for reproductive rights graffiti in Florida, is:

Caleb Freestone #07786-506  
FCI Yazoo City Low  
P.O. BOX 5000  
Yazoo City, MS 39194

[The Philadelphia Anarchist Black Cross has a post up with info and ways to donate and there is a crowd-funding campaign set-up here.](#)

## Prison Censorship

Orisanmi Burton, author of *Tip of the Spear: Black Radicalism, Prison Repression and the Long Attica Revolt*, has published [a letter to prisoncrats in response to the censorship of his book and attempts to stop prisoners from being able to read it.](#)

A federal court has dismissed [a lawsuit brought by South Carolina prisoners](#), upholding a policy that allows the SC prison system to censor all interviews with prisoners. In another recent court case, a different federal judge [“ruled the U.S. government can hide findings about whether people who died in federal prison received adequate medical care,](#) partly out of fear that those records could be used to criticize prison officials.”

## General Prison News and Abolitionist Media Updates

[Texas Observer writer Michelle Pitcher recently published a major article on the Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee](#) and prisoner organizing in Texas, featuring contributions from anarchist prisoner Julio Alex “Comrade Z” Zuniga.

### From the article:

IWOC has backed some of the largest prisoner-led labor strikes in history. In 2016, incarcerated workers from multiple states withheld their labor to honor the 45th anniversary of the historic 1971 Attica Prison uprising—the bloody demonstration during which prisoners took control of the New York facility to fight for better conditions, calling for an end to modern-day slavery. After cellphone footage of the 2016 strike leaked, the U.S. Department of Justice conducted an investigation and published [a report](#) on living conditions and violence in Alabama’s prisons. Similar strikes took place in 2018 and 2023 in various states, including Texas.

This December, IWOC, along with [Jailhouse Lawyers Speak](#), another national collective involving prisoner activists based in Pennsylvania, is calling for a weeklong work stoppage in prisons nationwide to coincide with outside demonstrations calling for an end to the 13th Amendment’s exception clause. Jailhouse Lawyers Speak is offering assistance to prisoners who face retaliation for participating.

IWOC is not the first group to attempt to unionize Texas prisoners in the modern era. The Texas Prison Labor Union was founded in 1995. Its aim, as described [in 1998 by the Prison Legal News](#), a magazine produced by the nonprofit Human Rights Defense Center, was to “organize Texas prisoners and their supporters into a single body to promote social justice,

human rights, and workers’ rights.” The union, funded by member dues and donations, [distributed](#) a flier with updates on lawsuits against the prison system, helped connect prisoners with researchers, and provided other resources (including a booklet of Tai Chi exercises). As recently as 2023, people describing themselves as members of the union have contacted legislators calling for pay for prisoners.

In July 2014, IWOC minted its statement of purpose, which is to build solidarity among incarcerated and nonincarcerated workers and to support “those engaging in collective action or who put their own lives at risk to improve the conditions of all.” Peril, the IWOC founding member, told the *Observer* that previously no nationwide union had “really tied together and pushed forward ideas about how having prison slavery as a competing labor force undermines everyone’s conditions in the workplace.” [Robert Roberson, a Texas prisoner who was due to be executed, has now had his execution delayed, although Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton is still pushing hard for the execution to go ahead.](#)

[Jailhouse Lawyers Speak are looking for people to help distribute application forms for their Seasonal Joy Project, which provides gifts for the children of incarcerated people. They’re also continuing to prepare for the December 2024 Shut ‘Em Down week of action, as well as preparing for a campaign to free Sundiata Jawanza in 2025.](#)

[The Marshall Project has published a report on Andrew Ciolli, a warden who oversaw staff abuse at BOP Florence including the torture of Eric King, who is now running a national training center.](#)

Texas prisoner Jason Walker continues to publish new articles on a regular basis, covering issues such as [the failure of TDCJ’s attempt to tackle drug use by banning physical mail.](#)

The Final Straw Radio show

recently broadcast [an interview on conditions in the Asheville jail following the hurricane](#).

Recent episodes of *Kite Line Radio* have covered [the fight for parole with Loretta Pierre](#), a woman who [has been denied parole by the Mississippi prison system 14 times](#), and [struggles against jail and prison expansion](#).

IDOC Watch recently organized a phone zap to demand [a prisoner is allowed to visit with his terminally ill mother](#), and another to demand [that a prisoner be given medical care](#). Another action was [successful in getting staff at Miami CF to carry out a wellness check on Cedric Thompson](#), who had been facing threats and whose family had been unable to contact him. IDOC Watch have also published [a new report from Khalfani Malik Khaldun on deaths at New Castle CF](#).

In Detroit, [Thelonious Searcy](#), who [was wrongfully convicted of murder in 2004](#), has been granted a court date to try and get his conviction overturned.

## International

The UK state continues to take harsh measures against the Filton 10, [who are being held pre-trial on terrorism charges for an alleged action against a factory supplying weapons to Israel](#). Fatema Zainab Rajwani, one of the defendants who volunteers at a community school, [is not being allowed to see paintings sent in by the children she works with](#). You can [read a new letter from Fatema here](#). There's also [a crowdfunder to support five people who've been imprisoned after another action against a weapons factory in Glasgow](#).

Also in the UK, [Ryan Dwyer](#), a prisoner who had been paroled after [serving a sentence for taking part in an anti-police riot in Bristol](#), [has now been recalled to prison](#).

[All four of the Chilean anarcho-nihilist defendants in the Susaron 4 case have now been sentenced to either prison or intensive probation](#). [Abolition Media](#) have translated a [new interview with Héctor Llaütul](#)

[Carrillanca](#), a [Mapuche political prisoner held by the Chilean state](#). Werken Rafael Pichun Collonao, another Mapuche political prisoner, has also [published a new open letter](#).

[An international day of action to free Georges Abdallah was held on October 24](#), with a huge demonstration in Brussels that week demanding his freedom.

Greek anarchist prisoner Fotis Tziotzis has shared [a new article about his prison conditions](#).

The Budapest Antifa case continues, and [supporters of Maja T have shared news about the extent of collaboration between the German state and Orban's far-right government](#). Finn, a prisoner held for his role in forest defense, has written [a report on the harassment he has faced while in the German prison system](#).

In Russia, [95 prisoners of war including Ukrainian human rights activist Maksym Butkevych have been released in a prisoner swap](#), but [13 more people have just been sentenced to prison for anti-war sabotage actions](#).

[Freedom News have published a report on the case of Enric Duran, who is on trial in France on money laundering charges](#). In an earlier case, Enric had previously managed to take nearly half a million euros from banks and used them to fund a variety of social movements.

## Uprising Defendants

See [Uprising Support](#) for more info, and check out [the Antirepression PDX site](#) for updates from Portland cases. To the best of our knowledge they currently include:

[Tyre Means 49981-086](#)  
USP Victorville  
US Penitentiary  
P.O. Box 3900  
Adelanto, CA 92301

[Margaret Channon 49955-086](#)  
FCI Tallahassee  
P.O. Box 5000  
Tallahassee, FL 32314

[Malik Muhammad #23935744](#)  
Oregon State Penitentiary  
2605 State Street  
Salem, OR 97310

[Cyan Waters Bass #23905849](#)  
Oregon State Correctional Institution  
3405 Deer Park Drive SE  
Salem, Oregon 97310

[Montez Lee 22429-041](#)  
FCI Ray Brook  
Federal Correctional Institution  
PO Box 900  
Ray Brook, NY 12977

[Matthew White #21434-041](#)  
USP Terre Haute  
PO Box 33  
Terre Haute, IN 47808

[Matthew Rupert #55013-424](#)  
USP Big Sandy  
US Penitentiary  
P.O. Box 2068  
Inez, KY 41224

[José Felan #54146-380](#)  
FCI Terre Haute  
Federal Correctional Institution  
P.O. Box 33  
Terre Haute, IN 47808

[David Elmakayes 77782-066](#)  
FCI McKean  
Federal Correctional Institution  
P.O. Box 8000  
Bradford, PA 16701

[Andrew Duncan-Augustyniak](#)  
Smart Communications/PA DOC  
Andrew Duncan-Augustyniak / QN9211  
SCI Rockview  
PO Box 33028  
St Petersburg, Florida 33733

[Khalif Miller #70042-066](#)  
USP Big Sandy  
U.S. Penitentiary  
P.O. Box 2068  
Inez, KY 41224

[Alvin Joseph 1002016959](#)  
Hays State Prison  
PO Box 668  
Trion, GA 30753

[Richard Hunsinger 16066-509](#)  
FCI Forrest City Low  
P.O. Box 9000  
Forrest City, AR 72335

[John Wade #1003510744](#)  
PO Box 3877

doesn't have a monopoly on disaster response and their actions lacking compassion and contextual understanding simply reaffirm the utility of grassroots solidarity efforts supporting those in the crosshairs of disaster capitalism's rapid rise as the floodwaters recede from homes.

Even if all we have is air mattresses on the floor of a warehouse or church, we are grateful to be able to offer refuge for people who no longer have safe homes to return to, and only wish we could do the same for our loved ones in Tijuana who contra viento y marea survive the violence of borders. Even if all we have to share is food, water, gatorade, fuel, ppe, and herbal medicine, we are grateful to have the ability to share what we have with people who have lost so much, and only wish there weren't armies and genocide complicit international bodies, agencies, and institutions preventing us from doing the same for our loved ones in Gaza.

## With Helene Behind Us and Milton Before Us

Many incarcerated people in the storm path experienced [labor exploitation](#) in the state's frantic push to clear Hurricane Helene related debris from the streets before being lashed by another historic climate event. Prisoners were also [forced to shelter](#) caged in mandatory evacuation situated institutions. [Fight Toxic Prisons'](#) rapid abolitionist organizing exposed county jails such as Orient Road in flood zone A, a mandatory evacuation area, adding crushing public pressure and media attention as Milton closed in with numerous county institutions [refusing to follow emergency evacuation orders](#).



In response to hundreds of incarcerated people caged to endure Milton's historic impact, mutual aid organizers moved pallets of water and gatorade through the prison gates of an impacted institution as solidarity based community organizing surge-responded with mutual aid centers focusing on response, resource sharing, and access to supportive services.

## Helping One is Helping All

From Pasco to Pinellas to Hillsborough to Manatee counties and beyond, intersectional climate justice, housing justice, mutual aid and solidarity ethos organizations rapidly mounted resource access points as aid flowed in from autonomous supply lines to the north.

[Rescue Pinellas](#) emerged as a search and rescue effort, organized from below, where locals could organize to rescue their neighbors from floodwaters. [Streets of Paradise](#) mobilized shower and laundry services in Sarasota, Milton's landing ground. [Love Has No Borders](#) expanded resource distribution to large, weekly street shares on debris-clogged North Tampa streets. [St. Pete Food Not Bombs](#) and [Tampa Food Not Bombs](#) bolstered hot meal distributions, getting food circulating to vulnerable, food and housing insecure community members. [PSL Tampa Bay](#) and [St. Pete Tenant's Union](#) have been fighting for a rent freeze and housing justice in the wake of evictions in flood-devastated low income housing projects. [Project No Labels](#) continues to populate and move resources through a Pinellas Mutual Aid Hub. [Kaon City Medics](#) has attended to the

medical and wellness needs of many people impacted by both storms. [Florida for Change](#), [Tampa Bay Mutual Aid](#), [Progressive People's Action Pinellas](#), [New Era Young Lords](#), [Tampa DSA](#) and [Lakeland Mutual Aid](#) are just a small number of the movement-rooted mutual aid responses mobilizing work crews and sharing supplies to meet emergent needs. All of the veins opened up between and before us have aided in our rapid organizing response through the connectivity we have built through years of relationship building for resiliency as we have watched our communities endure the double gut-punch of devastating twin climate events within a brief two week span.



With environmental catastrophe and climate gentrification devastating the sunshine state, a communal recovery and liberatory, horizontal response have stitched our intersectional movements together in this moment and time to heal from the disasters behind us and build our capacity to confront those we see approaching on the horizon.

As old systems and narratives break down and compost, uncovering other ways of being in relationship and exchanging resources that are rooted in regenerating our physical and social ecologies, we would do well to remember that the original meaning of apocalypse was not annihilation, but to reveal and to uncover. The unknown is always difficult to face, but as waters reclaim beaches and canals throughout our ecosystem and more and more people awoken to new possibilities, perhaps this is not an ending, but a new beginning, collectively written. What is a power outage to people who build power while the lights are out? And what is a city underwater to people



**Statement from Mexican anarchist prisoner, Jorge “Yorch” Esquivel, arrested on December 8, 2022, and sentenced to seven years and six months in prison on fabricated charges.**

Hey Compas,

How’s everyone? I’m a bit stressed because I haven’t been given any information related to my appeal. The courts continue on strike and they haven’t given me any response. I also want to mention that the judge who is ruling on the appeal is the same judge who sentenced me, so I don’t hold out much hope for the appeal. However, we have the writ of amparo which will be ruled upon by another court. For that I hope they take a couple years off my sentence at least, or if its possible, absolve me of all charges because there is no evidence against me and yet they still convicted me.

I ask that you all continue supporting me with political pressure, in whatever way you all can, with letters, artwork, collecting goods I need here in prison, material to make handcrafts like thread and beads, colored markers, coloring books, mica paper, colored pencils, magazines, books, recipes, clothes, underwear, socks, clothes for the cold, etc. Whatever you can acquire can be left at *La Clandestina: Espacio de Encuentros* in Santa María la Ribera in Mexico City.

I also want to thank the compas from the Los Angeles Anarchist Black Cross and the Mexico Anarchist Black Cross, for the solidarity and effort to include me in the international list of political prisoners of the Anarchist Black Cross Federation.

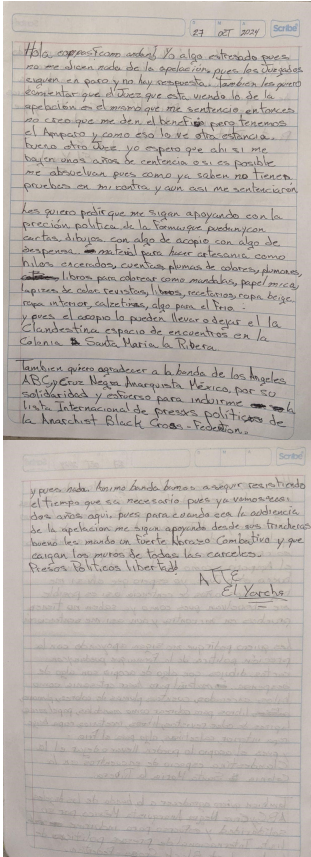
That is all for now. We will continue resisting for the time that is necessary. I’ve already been here almost two years. Whenever they schedule the appeal hearing, I hope you all can continue supporting me from your trenches. I send you all a combative embrace.

Let the walls of all prisons fall!

Free the political prisoners!

El Yorch

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## Survival in the Sunshine State: Mobilizing in the Wake of Helene and Milton

October 28, 2024

**Report from Mutual Aid Disaster Relief (MADR) on mutual aid organizing in Florida following recent hurricanes.**

On September 24th, category 4 Hurricane Helene began gouging its destructive path across the southeast causing flooding along the gulf coast of Florida even before slamming at landfall into the Big Bend area and continuing in a devastating route leaving 230 dead with hundreds still missing. Two weeks later, with Helene debris still lining residential streets, communities across Florida were hit with Hurricane Milton which

reached land as a category 3 storm and continued as a sustained hurricane system cutting across the middle of the state.

As Florida fell dark, with over three million losing power, flood waters seeped into Tampa streets, homes were felled, debris clogged the streets, and dozens of lives were lost in a climate event described as a one in one thousand year rain event, burying already Helene-devastated communities in one and a half feet of rain in twenty-four hours. The hyper-intensified climate events were fueled by historically high temperatures in the Gulf.

## The Battle for Paradise

Between National Guard and FEMA emergency mapping giving a false all-clear in flood devastated neighborhoods and multibillion dollar cash shortfalls for state storm response due to the cash and arms pipeline to fortify the genocide in Gaza, government responses have abandoned communities to displacement, debilitating loss, and storm-related evictions. Naturally, these communities pivot away from state actors and to trusted movements for solidarity and visibility. Grassroots, communal recovery mobilizations responded with immediate search and rescue, supply distribution, hot meals, fuel access, on-site free markets, mutual aid centers, solar charging stations, flood cleanup assistance, chainsaw crews, and other necessities for survival.



The state, for their part, responded by leveraging threats to withhold top-down aid in communities they feared to enter. If they’re scared of our communities, they’re not part of our communities and can’t help our communities heal. The state, contrary to its limited vision,

Jackson, GA 30233

Diego Vargas 55070-424  
FCI Schuylkill  
PO Box 759  
Minersville, PA 17954

Aline Espinosa-Villegas #22814-509  
FMC Carswell  
P.O. Box 27137  
Fort Worth, Texas 76127

Address letter to Angel, address envelope to Aline A Espinosa-Villegas.

Mujera Benjamin Lunga'ho #08572-509  
FCI Forrest City Medium  
Federal Correctional Institution  
P.O. Box 3000  
Forrest City, AR 72336

Christopher Tindal 04392-509  
FCI Cumberland  
PO Box 1000  
Cumberland, MD 21501

## Upcoming Birthdays

Dwayne Staats

One of the two Vaughn 17 defendants to be convicted for taking part in the Vaughn prison uprising of early 2017. Dwayne and his co-defendant Jarreau “Ruk” Ayers bravely admitted to their own parts in the uprising, and then, free to testify openly without fear of incriminating themselves any further, tore holes in the prosecution’s attempts to convict anyone else - as he put it, “we’d accept being stabbed in the chest to present others from getting stabbed in the back”. To learn more about Dwayne in his own words, you can follow his instagram, read his letter to the Kentucky Attorney General, or his contribution to the Vaughn zine, “Live from the Trenches”.

**Birthday:** November 10

Address:

Dwayne Staats 467005  
Delaware DOC - 1101  
P.O. Box 777  
Las Vegas NV 89193

**Andrei Marach**

Antifascist from Brest. Detained on

2 March 2021 on suspicion of involvement in a criminal organisation of anarchists and gross violation of public order (Articles 285 and 342 of the Criminal Code). Andrei has a history of repression, he was serving an administrative arrest in early August 2020. On September 6, 2022, Andrei was sentenced to 5 years in prison.

Belarusian prisons will usually only accept letters in Belarusian or Russian, so if you don’t speak one of those languages your best bet is to email your message to [belarus\\_abc\(AT\)riseup.net](mailto:belarus_abc(AT)riseup.net) or [use this online form](#) and they should be able to translate your greetings and pass them on.

**Birthday:** November 10

Address:

(Belarusian or Russian letters only - [use this form for English messages](#))

IK-17, ul. 1-ya Zavodskaya, 8, g. Shklov, 213004, Belarus  
Andrey Igorevich Marach

**John Wade**

John B. Wade is a Black Atlanta activist who was convicted on charges related to the George Floyd Rebellion in the Summer of 2020. He was arrested on November 2nd, 2020 in an inter-agency raid along with two others, Vida Jones and Ellie Brett. They faced charges related to a string of arsons against government property and police cruisers. Wade has been repeatedly harassed by law enforcement since the beginning of the mass rebellion. [You can read some of his words here.](#)

**Birthday:** November 11

Address:

John Wade #1003510744  
PO Box 3877  
Jackson, GA 30233

**Dzmitry Rezanovich**

Dzmitry Rezanovich is an anarchist from Gomel. Arrested on the night of 28-29 October 2020 close to Ukrainian border by Belarusian border guards together with Sergey Romanov, Dmitry Rezanovich and

Ihar Alinevich. Charged with terrorism and illegal possession of firearms. According to the prosecutor’s office, he and his comrades organized several actions in Soligorsk and Mozyr against state institutions. On 22 December 2021, he was sentenced to 19 years in prison.

Belarusian prisons will usually only accept letters in Belarusian or Russian, so if you don’t speak one of those languages your best bet is to email your message to [belarus\\_abc\(AT\)riseup.net](mailto:belarus_abc(AT)riseup.net) or [use this online form](#) and they should be able to translate your greetings and pass them on.

**Birthday:** November 12

Address:

(Belarusian or Russian letters only - [use this form for English messages](#))

Rezanovich Dmitry Grigorievich  
IK №14, ul. Mira, 1A, Novosady, Barysau district, Minsk region, 222125

**Thomas Blackmon**

Thomas Blackmon is one of the prisoners wrongfully convicted in the aftermath of the historic Lucasville Uprising. Ohio now uses Connect Network/GTL, so you can contact him online by going to [connectnetwork.com](http://connectnetwork.com), selecting “Add a facility”, choosing “State: Ohio, Facility: Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections”, going into the “messaging” service, and then adding him as a contact by searching his name or “185-291”.

**Birthday:** November 12

Address:

Thomas Blackmon  
#185-291  
OSP  
878 Coitsville Hubbard Rd  
Youngstown OH 44505

**Rasheem Matthews**

Rasheem Matthews is one of the prisoners wrongfully convicted in the aftermath of the historic Lucasville Uprising. Ohio now uses Connect Network/GTL, so you can contact him online by going to

[connectnetwork.com](http://connectnetwork.com), selecting “Add a facility”, choosing “State: Ohio, Facility: Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections”, going into the “messaging” service, and then adding him as a contact by searching his name or “223-185”.

**Birthday:** November 22

**Address:**

Rasheem Matthews  
#223-185  
OSP  
878 Coitsville Hubbard Rd  
Youngstown OH 44505

**Dontrell Baker**

[Dontrell Baker is a former Ferguson prisoner who has completed a sentence connected to the Ferguson uprising](#) and is now incarcerated for a different incident.

Missouri now uses Securus, so you can send him a message by creating an account at [securustech.online](http://securustech.online), clicking “emessaging - launch account”, then searching his name while selecting “State: Missouri, Inmate ID: 1282093”.

**Birthday:** November 24

**Address:**

Dontrell Baker #1282093  
C/O Digital Mail Center-Missouri  
DOC  
PO Box 25678  
Tampa, FL 33622-5678

**Josh Williams**

[A staple of the Ferguson rebellion. Josh Williams was sentenced to 8 years in prison](#) for his actions in attempting to light fires near a Quick Trip gas station, which others quickly extinguished, during a protest against the killing of Black 18 year old Antonio Martin by police in Berkeley, Missouri on Christmas Eve 2014. [You can learn more about Josh by reading some of his words here. A support site has been set up for Josh](#), and they reported in May 2021 that, “Josh has been held in solitary confinement on 23 hour lockdown since the beginning of the uprisings in June of 2020. He has limited phone privileges and hasn’t been able to go outside.”

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Missouri now uses Securus, so you can send him a message by creating an account at [securustech.online](http://securustech.online), clicking “emessaging - launch account”, then searching his name while selecting “State: Missouri, Inmate ID: 01292002”. His tablet access is often restricted.

**Birthday:** November 25

**Address:**

Joshua Williams #1292002  
C/O Digital Mail Center-Missouri  
DOC  
PO Box 25678  
Tampa, FL 33622-5678

*cover photo: student protest encampment in Quebec*

## I Became an Anarchist While Working for the Democratic Party

*November 1, 2024*

**A critical and personal account of working inside of and attempting to organize within the Democratic Party in Nevada.**

*by Jesse M.*

There are three places in Las Vegas I truly liked: two of them were bars, and the third was Writer’s Block, a wonderful bookstore shaped like a literal block. It was here, a couple days into a job with the Nevada State Democratic Party, that I picked up Chomsky’s “On Anarchism” to get an introduction to the ideology.

It’s a terrible introduction to the ideology. Great bookstore, best ideology, not a very good book.

I start with this because I don’t want to mislead you. If I was a pure propagandist, I would say that this experience of working for the state Dems made me into an anarchist, when the truth is that I was thinking about it almost from the very start. Becoming an anarchist, however, helped me interpret what I was experiencing while I had the job.

I had worked in electoral politics before: fresh out of high school, age 18, I got a job on the Obama campaign, mostly because I wasn’t finding other jobs, and showing up to the Obama office to volunteer seemed a better use of time than trying in vain to get a job at Best Buy. So, I wasn’t a complete novice... but in 2008, I was mostly working with the IT department. Organizing was all new to me.

## Backstory

Nevada’s caucus in 2016 went poorly. More accurately, [the state convention](#) went poorly, which you can go down a whole rabbit hole reading about, if you want. What’s important to establish is that the Hillary and Bernie sides absolutely hated each other. The Hillary side thought the Bernie Bros were violent, rampaging sexists who had threatened to kill the state party chairwoman; the Bernie side thought the whole process had been rigged against them in 2016. Because of all that, the most important thing was for 2020’s caucus to go smoothly: no one threatening to throw any chairs (if you mention “chair throwing” to anyone involved with Nevada electoral politics, you will get a long explanation of how this did or did not really happen), no one accusing anyone of fraud, just a simple, transparent process with a clear winner.

## The Job

It was both a campaign job and it wasn’t: it was for a political party, and we were doing the same work (phonebanking, planning events, managing volunteers) that any political campaign would do. The difference was that this organizing for the 2020 Nevada Democratic Caucus wasn’t for any of the candidates, it was the neutral, referee-like logistical work to set up the volunteers running the caucus.

The most important thing to know about caucuses is that they suck and everyone hates them. Seriously, everyone. The progressive wing of the Democrats hate them because they’re undemocratic, forcing people to show up in person to a

is worth, the bailiff evicted the tenant this morning. The brigade takes good note of this. Further details on this case will follow.

Autonomous activists in Montreal also took over a building for a community gathering of workshops and other radical events. See [photos and a report here](#).



The [Montreal Autonomous Tenant Union](#) has also been busy organizing pickets demanding a rent freeze at one location, in Boston, MA, the [local tenant union organized a block party](#), and in Sacramento, CA, the [Sac Valley Tenants Union took part in a rally](#) at an apartment complex organized by tenants to demand repairs following a fire.



Rally in Sacramento, CA by tenants demanding repairs following a fire at their apartment complex.

Meanwhile in Los Angeles, CA, [locals of the Los Angeles Tenant Union \(LATU\)](#):

...organized two back-to-back protests against gentrifying real estate companies who have been harassing elderly tenants in Highland [and...] Echo Park...For the second protest, over 100 tenants marched up a quiet street in La Cañada to confront [a] developer...



Locals with the Los Angeles Tenant Union hold rally against developer.

Service workers continue to organize and join the anti-capitalist labor union, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). In Portland, OR, workers at a [Peet’s Coffee location have now joined the union](#), joining workers in the bay area at several stores who have also been organizing and holding demonstrations. Last week in Oakland, CA, IWW members held a in store protest “supporting a fellow worker in a disciplinary hearing.” Back in Portland, [service workers at the Fried Egg](#) also have been fighting and holding pickets against the targeting of IWW organizers.



IWW picket outside of the Fried Egg restaurant in Portland, OR.

Autonomous disaster relief efforts continue across Appalachia and the South in the wake of devastating hurricanes Helene and Milton. A recent [“Palestine to Appalachia” caravan was organized](#), bringing much needed supplies to impacted areas. Check out continuous updates from [Mutual Aid Disaster Relief](#) and [Triangle Mutual Aid](#).

Several Cop City protesters who faced years in prison for taking part in a demonstration at a university in Georgia have had their charges dropped. According to the Atlanta Solidarity Fund newly released video from a police bodycam from the arrest shows:

...Atlanta Police higher-ups

conspiring to fabricate felony charges against protesters because they were part of a group which opposed Cop City. In the video, GSU police say there’s no basis for felony charges for 8 people who protested at a construction site. An APD Major pressures officers to come up with anything at all to charge them with, to help APD crack down on “this group” - meaning the Stop Cop City movement. The protesters were subsequently charged with felony burglary, jailed for almost a week, and fought the case for 2 years. The prosecutor dropped all charges days before trial. It could not be more clear: APD is manipulating the criminal legal system to silence its critics.

See [the footage here](#).



## Upcoming Events

- **November 1st-3rd:** Chicago Anarchist Skillshare. Chicago, IL. [More info here](#).
- **November 9th:** Benefit for Kitsap Food Not Bombs. Bremerton, WA. [More info here](#).
- **November 26th - 28th:** Indigenous anarchist convergence. Occupied so-called Phoenix, AZ. [More info here](#).
- **December 7th:** San Antonio Anarchist Bookfair. San Antonio, TX. [More info here](#).
- **February 28th - March 2nd:** Florida Abolitionist Gathering. Gainesville, FL. [More info here](#).

## Letter from Anarchist Prisoner Jorge “Yorch” Esquivel

*October 28, 2024*



[illegible]

Welcome, to *This Is America*,  
September 27th, 2024.

All this and more, but first, *let's get to the news!*

Resistance in solidarity with Palestine and against the continued war and genocide in Gaza continues, as mass protests, student walkouts, building occupations, and direct actions continued across the world.

Militant anti-war march in the streets of Montreal.

**HUNDREDS RALLY IN CLAREMONT**

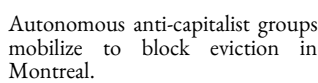
about 7  
abc7.com

Protesters stream into building in Claremont, CA.

In early October, hundreds of students at Pomona University in Southern California walked out in protest of the ongoing war and genocide happening in Gaza, taking over Carnegie Hall for several hours. The occupation and walkout is just the latest mass demonstration organized by students who this spring voted in a campus referendum for the university to disclose and divest from Israel. After the university refused, in April the students stormed and occupied the office of the president, leading to around 20 arrests.

In the bay area, “[p]rotesters blocked entrances to a Lockheed Martin research facility..”, at Harvard students organized a “study-in” in solidarity with Palestine, at UCLA a demonstration organized by Jewish students in solidarity with Palestine was broken up by police and one person was arrested, and at the University of Minnesota, students in late October occupied a hall on the university campus. Read a

In repression news, a heavily armed group of riot police raided the residential home of a student in Philadelphia, under the pretext of investigating minor pro-Palestinian vandalism that had taken place on the Penn State campus. No one was charged and no arrests were made. Read a full report on the incident in *The Interceptor* [here](#).



In tenant news, in Montreal, according to a report from the Anti-Eviction Brigade:

Yesterday morning, a precarious tenant in fragile health was to be evicted by a bailiff, following shenanigans by her landlord. The tenant had managed to pay their rent, but only by going into debt. She paid cash to the janitor, but the owner denied receiving the payments and dragged the tenant to court...[where the judge] ruled in favor of the owner.

After a few other equally dishonest misadventures, an eviction procedure was ordered... In response, more than thirty comrades associated with the brigade and from various anti-capitalist backgrounds through their organizations, came to oppose this eviction and show their support for the tenant.

The brigade managed to keep the bailiff at bay for the day, allowing the tenant to go to an important medical appointment and allowing her to get her first good night's sleep in days. The landlord had promised that she could stay in her home until the end of October. However, the word of a landlord worth what it

The main difference between a caucus and a primary is that primaries are Official Elections: you go and vote in an election run by the government. A caucus is entirely party-run, and election rules (to my non-lawyer knowledge) essentially don't apply to it, because it's not *technically* an election. You can make them as accessible or inaccessible as you want, they're events run by a political party to the rules of that political party. So, that means that the entirety of planning two of the first three elections in the primary cycle (up through 2020) was done on a shoestring by the state political parties. And that means they were organized by first-time political workers working way too many hours for not very much money, in way over our heads.

That's me! I worked for the Nevada Dems from August 2019 through March 2020, making \$3,250 a month. I had to find over a hundred people to volunteer to chair their precincts, spread across more than 20 locations across Nevada (my turf was basically everything south and east of Vegas).

Because paying people enough that they'd be able to afford housing would cost campaigns a lot more money, they instead rely on "supporter housing." That means instead of your own place to live, some nice person or family lets you sleep in their guest bedroom for a while. On the one hand, it's a great way for scrappy campaigns to get organizers on the ground with little cost, but even bigger campaigns have come to rely on it. It puts added pressure on the organizer to not act up and jeopardize your job; it's one thing to not have paychecks and in risk getting evicted, but this isn't even a formal living arrangement with a lease, it's just some guy letting you sleep there because he wants to help the Democrats. And if you're not with

The hours for the job started off bad and got worse. At the beginning of the job, we worked five and a half days a week. With seven weeks until the election, our schedule changed: ten hour days, seven days a week.

There's a certain amount of hours one can devote to something in a week before it takes over every other part of the brain. If you've ever played a video game so much that you can still see it when you're trying to go to sleep, you've probably felt this; it's called the "Tetris effect" in that sense. But it's even worse when it happens with a job; in our case as electoral organizers, a job involving politics. Even when we would go out to the bar to drink after working 70 hours, there's no way we could talk about anything else, because we hadn't *done* anything else to think about. (I had a Tinder date with a gorgeous Bernie organizer, and I asked "can we talk about something else" at one point. I don't think we did.)

So what did we spend those endless hours doing? A lot of phone calls. Early on, it was basically taking a shotgun approach and calling through our lists (at least 200 dials a day) of previous volunteers for the party or people our data had otherwise tagged as being potential volunteers (based on voting patterns, etc). Later on, once we had a good network of volunteers to rely on, we could set up phonebanks with them and otherwise outsource the work of recruiting more precinct chairs to those volunteers.

Especially early, calling people to get them to volunteer really sucked. Because of all the 2016 drama, the former Hillary supporters didn't want anything to do with it because they thought a gang of Bernard Brothers would tear them limb from limb, and the Bernie supporters thought it would be rigged from the start. I was calling through a list of people to try to get them to *run* the caucus, and people were telling me they didn't even want to *participate*.

In addition to our volunteer

recruitment, we were required to get a certain number of new Democrats registered to vote per week; something about this got us money from the national DNC. My true “welcome to Vegas” moment was standing on the asphalt outside a Wal-Mart when it was close to 100 degrees registering people to vote. Being a Seattleite, I didn’t put on any sunscreen, and got a glorious sunburn followed by a farmers’ tan in about two days. (Wal-Mart kicked us out of their parking lot. I found that the two best spots were at UNLV and outside a 99-cent store. UNLV was great because it had plenty of shade; the 99-cent store’s security not only didn’t kick me out, I registered one of them to vote.)

Our job was mostly self-directed, with metrics we had to hit that were based around results: this many precinct chairs, etc. We had trackers upon trackers in Google docs. Because I had pretty easy turf, I was hitting all my numbers without making their recommended/required phone calls per day, but since I was getting results, hey, no one cared.

This was interrupted by what I started calling “HQ Freakout Days,” when HQ staff went nuts over organizers not making enough phone calls, and we needed to stop *all* other work and just make X number of dials. Not any tangible result from them, just make that many phone calls. Basically, stop the actual work you’re doing and hit our made-up metrics instead, because we’re your boss. For those days, I made what I euphemistically called my “youth vote outreach” list, which was people 29 and under who we’d never contacted before. Because I knew none of them would ever pick up, and we only had to let it ring four times and hang up without leaving a message, I could get through over 100 of those in an hour, easily. That’s what they get for valuing input metrics over output ones.

# I Hate our Electoral System

If you're like most people, when you think of people who work in

politics other than politicians, you think of morons like David Axelrod or James Carville who at one time had real jobs on campaigns, and now collect paychecks going on TV while a title like “Democratic strategist” appears under them. This infuriates me, firstly because that’s *not a job*. Watching them has made every media consumer think they, too, could be a “strategist” for their political party, like video game fans think they can be in charge of a video game developer as an “ideas guy” without being able to make anything.

Part of what makes our electoral system so terrible is its system of what jobs do exist. Most people who work in politics do so for very short stretches of time, like I did. If you make it through one campaign cycle and work into the next one, you’re an aged, rugged veteran. The person who hired me, two levels of experience above me, was 21 years old at the time.

When I say “our electoral system,” I don’t just mean the laws around how elections work. I mean the broader system of our two parties, the massive industry of consultants and pollsters either supporting or grifting them, and our news media treating the election like a two-year leadup to its Super Bowl.

When a campaign cycle starts up, like for the 2020 cycle, all the campaigns hire at once. There’s not nearly enough locals to hire to staff up every campaign’s offices across the state, so campaigns hire from wherever. It ends up being a lot of recent political science graduates who just want to Work In Politics for a bit. So, these 21 year-olds are airdropped in from New York, California, and Massachusetts to organize in Iowa, Nevada, New Hampshire, and South Carolina for six months. Then their job ends and they go back home. (Talking to one Buttigieg organizer, she sent resumes to every Democratic candidate and took the job with Buttigieg because that’s who got back to her first. We’re supposed to take seriously these people saying that democracy is at risk if we don’t vote, but they’re so apathetic about who wins that they’ll help any Democrat become president who pays them? Mind-boggling. “Blue

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no matter who,” truly.)

The electoral system is so focused on the specific immediate task at hand, the election these people were hired to win (and working people to the bone doing it), that there’s never any room to step back and build something long-term. No one is planning for the Democratic party five or ten years from now (at least, not in a way that affects local organizing) because that’s ten or twenty times as long as the average staffer is expected to last. The feeling seems to be that every minute spent planning for something further out than the next election is a minute not spent working on winning the next election.

So, when I get on my anarchist high horse now and talk about how we need to spend our time, energy, and money on something other than electoral politics, it’s not the *voting* part that upsets me. It’s all this bullshit. Every election, we have to burn out all our most promising organizers in six months because there was no infrastructure for them to build on, and they have to make it all from scratch every time. It’s like we’re working extra hard to pay off our last payday loan, then taking out a new payday loan at the end, ensuring we’ll have to do the same thing over again next time.

## Classism in the Democratic Party

The “HQ staff,” the higher-paid people with the campaign, worked out of a building in a little office that housed some other campaigns. The field staff, such as myself, got to work there for maybe a few days of training, and then off to our new office: Panera Bread.

For about a month, despite constant promises that it was just around the corner, we didn’t have a field office. In the pre-COVID times when “work from home” was an alien concept, that meant that instead of doing our work from wherever, we all had to meet up at a local Panera Bread together at 9am six days a week and make calls there together. Five years later, I still can’t walk by a Panera Bread without

shuddering.

When we did get our own field office, it wasn’t in the nice upscale office park that HQ was. I don’t mind that they found something outside of a white neighborhood—I’ll organize anywhere, and if it was my money, I’d certainly save money on rent that way—but it’s worth noting that the HQ staff didn’t choose to put *themselves* there. It was in what seemed to be an abandoned doctor’s or dentist’s office, and it didn’t have modern conveniences like “drinkable running water.” We had to carry jugs of water over from the gas station every day just to have something to drink, and if you’ve lived in Vegas without dying, you know you have to drink a *lot* of water.

Having a physical separation, by around a 15-minute drive, is a perfect metaphor for how the professional class of the Democratic Party sees themselves compared to the ordinary people of the field staff. We weren’t let in on any strategy discussions, we weren’t told any inside information (because they were certain we’d leak it), we weren’t even allowed to physically *be around* them.

## Trying to Unionize

From the start, I was far more interested in trying to unionize the job than the job itself. I had developed a big interest in unions since I had gotten a union job at an AT&T store, gone on strike with CWA, joined DSA, gotten fired from AT&T, gotten my job reinstated through a grievance, and became a union steward. I had sent off a couple resumes to become an organizer at SEIU, to no success.

There was no shortage of issues to organize around: our pay sucked, with the next-lowest pay from a campaign being Bernie’s at \$3,500 a month (they may have, ironically, suffered from unionizing first). Our mileage reimbursement was awful, which was a big deal for people like me who had to drive to rural areas of the state. Above all that, there was an overall feeling that the HQ staff just didn’t care about us at all.

and for all to the persecution against Miguel Peralta.

In theory the justices must study the case from an intercultural perspective, taking into account the sociopolitical context of the political persecution. Doing so will show the dynamics of political power at play in the case, and the unequal relationship between those being persecuted and those doing the persecuting.

We know a decision from the courts won’t be sufficient in bringing justice to Miguel Peralta and the community of Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón. Ten years of state and cacique terror has unraveled the community fabric, separating community members from their families and territory, establishing division, mistrust, and fear among the population. The state itself is responsible for the criminalization, imprisonment, and persecution of community members of Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón, including Miguel Peralta. Justice will only come in the self-activity of the community, in the healing of relationships, in the reweaving of the community fabric.

We demand that the Supreme Court dictate absolute freedom for Miguel Peralta on November 6, allowing him and the community to forge their own path toward justice in conditions of freedom.

We call on everyone, wherever you are, in whatever capacity you have, to again show solidarity with Miguel Peralta and the struggle for his freedom. And not just for him, but for the community of Eloxochitlán and all Indigenous communities facing repression and criminalization at the hands of the state.

Absolute freedom for Miguel Peralta!

Freedom for all those persecuted and imprisoned!

Solidarity Group for the Freedom of Miguel Peralta, family members of Miguel Peralta and residents of Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón.

¡Libertad absoluta para Miguel Peralta!

Sesión en la Suprema Corte el 6 de noviembre 2024

A todas las personas, organizaciones y colectividades solidarias que han acompañado el camino por la libertad plena para Miguel Peralta, indígena mazateco de Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón:

Queremos compartirles que el día miércoles 6 de noviembre de 2024 la primera Sala de la Suprema Corte de Justicia de la Nación, en la Ciudad de México, discutirá el Amparo Directo en Revisión 6535/2023 de nuestro compañero Miguel Peralta.

Esta sesión se llevará a cabo después de casi diez años del conflicto sociopolítico que estalló en la comunidad de Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón, el 14 de diciembre de 2014, catalizando una ola de represión, criminalización, persecución y encarcelamiento en contra de integrantes de la Asamblea Comunitaria de Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón, entre ellos Miguel Peralta.

Miguel fue detenido en abril de 2015 bajo cargos fabricados relacionados con el mismo evento. En octubre de 2018 fue condenado a 50 años de prisión. Tras la interposición de un amparo, y casi un mes en huelga de hambre, en octubre de 2019 Miguel fue absuelto de todos los cargos y puesto en libertad.

Más de dos años después, el 4 de marzo de 2022, la Tercera Sala Penal de Oaxaca revocó su libertad, condenándolo a 50 años de prisión, emitiendo una orden de aprehensión en su contra. Desde entonces, Miguel ha sido desplazado de su comunidad, teniendo que vivir bajo la persecución política.

La primera Sala, que tiene en sus manos el asunto desde octubre de 2023, sesionará el próximo 6 de noviembre, luego de que el 19 de junio pasado la ministra Loretta Ortiz Ahlf retiró de la discusión el proyecto de sentencia. Ojalá, para bien de Miguel y de la comunidad mazateca de Eloxochitlán. El próximo miércoles lo sabremos qué propone la ministra para poner fin a

este martirio judicial. Las cinco personas que integran la sala son: Loretta Ortiz Ahlf, Juan Luis González Alcántara Carrancá, Jorge Mario Pardo Rebolledo, Ana Margarita Ríos Farjat y Alfredo Gutiérrez Ortiz Mena. Ese día, la Corte tendrá la oportunidad de poner fin a la persecución en contra de Miguel Peralta.

Ellas y ellos tienen la responsabilidad de dictar una sentencia con perspectiva intercultural, tomando en cuenta el contexto sociopolítico de la persecución penal, optando por hacer que prevalezca la inocencia de Miguel Peralta, frente a un cúmulo de pruebas que reflejan la asimetría de poder entre quienes acusan y quienes han sido perseguidos.

Sabemos que una decisión de la Corte no será suficiente para hacer justicia en el caso de Miguel Peralta y de la comunidad de Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón. Diez años de terror estatal y caciquil han deshecho el tejido comunitario en Eloxochitlán, separando a los miembros de la comunidad de sus familias y su territorio, estableciendo división, desconfianza y miedo entre la población. La justicia sólo vendrá de la autoorganización de la comunidad, de la sanación de las relaciones y de trabajar para remendar el tejido comunitario.

Exigimos a la Corte, la libertad absoluta de Miguel Peralta este 6 de noviembre, permitiéndole a él y a la comunidad forjar su propio camino hacia la justicia en condiciones de libertad.

Llamamos a todxs, donde quiera que estén, en la capacidad que tengan, a solidarizarse nuevamente con Miguel Peralta y la lucha por su libertad. Y no sólo por él, sino por la comunidad de Eloxochitlán y todas las comunidades indígenas que enfrentan represión y criminalización a manos del Estado.

¡Libertad absoluta para Miguel Peralta!

¡Libertad para todxs lxs perseguidxs y encarladxs!

Grupo de Apoyo en Solidaridad con Miguel Peralta, familiares y



anything other than our jobs in electoral politics, as a country, we've focused so much on electoral campaigns that we've lost the ability to do or even think about non-electoral ways to make political change.

There's nothing inherently wrong with voting, or registering other people to vote, but the *all-encompassing* focus on it means that everything else gets filtered through a vision where the only pathway is electoral changes. Imagine a conservative and a liberal see a news story about a strike on the docks by longshoremen. Conservatives are going to filter it through their Fox News propaganda and somehow link it to, "this must be because of DEI programs somehow." Liberals are going to wonder how the strike impacts the election, and maybe whether it's a ploy by a pro-Trump union to support him by tanking the economy. Neither is analyzing it as a political action on its own terms, without some external filter applied to it.

It's not even that people are burning themselves out on electoral *organizing* (though some are); it's just their focus, their news consumption. Liberals are reading the news and scrolling through five hours of takes on the election and the latest polls every day and feel exhausted from all the energy they've just put into politics, despite not doing anything productive.

It doesn't even get better once the election ends: those people burned themselves out on electoral politics, and get hit with a wave of post-election exhaustion, like D&D characters after a Haste spell. Even if they were successful, once they're done celebrating a win, they don't put that same time into non-electoral work. They just go do something other than politics, and save up their time and attention for the next election cycle.

## Conclusion

We have to break the loop of stumbling in an exhausted haze

from one election to another, over and over. We have to get people organizing, not for or against one candidate or party, but in ways unrelated to elections. Some people might argue that we need to devote some energy toward electoral politics, that we can't just abandon it entirely. Maybe that's true. But it feels like about 99% of our political energy is spent on electoralism. We have to move that balance toward everything else: organizing our workplaces into labor unions, our buildings into tenants' unions, our neighborhoods into communities that will fight for each other when we have to. We have to do organizing that I, a straight white guy focused on workplace organizing, can't even conceive of, because it's outside of my personal experiences.

What ended up making me an anarchist was not just realizing that I didn't think electoral politics was going to win us socialism, but seeing how it sapped resources that could be going into things that, just maybe, could. It was seeing not just that the Democrats are bad, but that the entire hierarchical structure that mandates some people make all the decisions and some people blindly follow orders is ineffective.

Control what you can control. You can't decide the next president by yourself, so start small and build from there: talk to your immediate neighbors, your coworkers. We're at a time uniquely deprived of community. We have to build community ourselves.

Image by [Thomas Hess](#) from [Pixabay](#)

## Freedom for Miguel Peralta! Hearing Scheduled for November 6

October 29, 2024

Communique from Miguel Peralta's support crew and family announcing a hearing at the Supreme Court scheduled for November 6, 2024.

To the people, organizations, and

collectives who have shown their solidarity and accompanied the struggle for the unconditional freedom of Miguel Peralta, Indigenous Mazatec of Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón.

We want to announce that on Wednesday, November 6, 2024, the Supreme Court of Justice of the Nation, in Mexico City, will rule on the appeal 6335/2023 in the case of our compañero Miguel Peralta.

This hearing comes almost ten years after a sociopolitical conflict exploded in the community of Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón, on December 14, 2014, catalyzing a wave of repression, criminalization, persecution, and imprisonment against members of the community assembly of Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón, including Miguel Peralta.

Miguel Peralta was arrested in April 2015 on fabricated charges, following the events in December 2014. In October 2018 he was sentenced to 50 years in prison. Following an appeal, and nearly a month on a hunger strike, in October 2019, he was absolved of all charges and released.

Over two years later, on March 4, 2022, his freedom was overturned by the Third Criminal Court in Oaxaca. He was again sentenced to 50 years in prison and a warrant was put out for his arrest. Since then, Miguel has been displaced from his community, having to live beneath political persecution.

In October 2023, the Supreme Court took on an appeal in Miguel Peralta's case. On November 6, 2024, they will discuss and rule on the appeal. This court date comes after a previous hearing on June 19 where justice Loretta Ortiz Ahlf postponed the ruling. We hope the postponement was a good sign for Miguel and the Mazatec community of Eloxochitlán de Flores Magón.

The five justices ruling on the case are Loretta Ortiz Ahlf, Juan Luis González Alcántara Carrancá, Jorge Mario Pardo Rebollo, Ana Margarita Ríos Farjat, and Alfredo Gutiérrez Ortiz Mena. On November 6, the court has the opportunity to put an end once

I got my first organizing lesson when I reached out to a couple of the more senior field organizers on the campaign: what someone says their political beliefs are doesn't mean shit when it comes to workplace organizing.

These two people were who, when I was first thinking of the idea of organizing, I assumed would be onboard. They were both Bernie-supporting DSA members. I called them up, and the response I got was some variation of, "I really need to maintain a good relationship with management because I need a promotion/letter of recommendation." (They both left the campaign fairly quickly anyway.)

This would have been a small unit, around a dozen people, so every card signed mattered a lot. (In organizing electoral campaigns, unlike most others, voluntary recognition is assumed; forcing the workers to go through an NLRB process would be political suicide when your bosses are trying to keep leadership of various unions happy.) I reached out to Campaign Workers Guild, a scrappy independent union that represents some political campaign workers, including, most relevantly, some state parties. (Checking their website, ~~Biden for President~~ Harris for President organized with CWG! Great job, y'all.)

Because we were split between Vegas and Reno staff, the hardest part was getting anyone in Reno onboard. If it had just been a vote in Vegas, we would've won handily, but the only person to ever join up from Reno flamed out from the job within a week or two. (You should be getting the idea by now that people come and go from these organizing jobs very quickly.)

I thought we had a majority at one point: another organizer in Vegas, a local, someone I thought I was developing a good relationship with, a self-described anarchist, told me that they wouldn't sign up first for fear of retaliation, but that they'd be the final card we needed. Okay, fine. So we got the other six cards, and I came to them to get the seventh card needed. Instead, they gave me a lot of objections that

made it clear they never intended on signing in the first place. I went to my car and cried.

Our union attempt stalled, but with real pressing issues, the card-signing and non-card-signing people came to a separate course of action: we would draft a letter to management of things we wanted to change. Not a list of *demands*, but of *requests*. Things like more car mileage reimbursement, cell phone reimbursement, more pay, drinkable water, and even basic things like a weekly meeting with HQ staff so we could check in.

I took the letter to the HQ office and sat down the the Caucus Director and Executive Director of the party. First, they wanted to let me know how much they appreciated that it was requests and not demands. Then, we went down the list of everything: no, no, no, no, no. The only thing they agreed to was the weekly meeting, and I think we ended up having that all of once.

Knowing what I know now about organizing, this would have been a key step in an escalation plan: I could have gotten the non-card-signers to buy into a plan of, "okay, if this letter doesn't get a serious response, what do we do next?," but instead, it didn't go anywhere. It was too close to the caucus to leave us time to make any change by that point.

Talking with a staffer who was there after I left, I heard they did end up unionizing with IBEW 2320.

## The App

Like the essay equivalent of a Godard film, seven pages in I'll start telling something resembling a story.

Part of the way the 2020 caucuses would be better than 2016, we were told, was that instead of an old-fashioned hotline to call in the results from each precinct, we would be using The App. Not just to report the results, but to run the caucus itself. Everything that happened in the caucus would be put into The App, which would guide you the whole way.

The problem we had was that this app didn't exist. In our training presentation for how to be a precinct chair, only a few months before the caucus, we had essentially placeholder slides for "this is what you *will* be doing with the app, when we have it. Which we will. Just not now."

Then, closer to the election, The App materialized. First, you had to download some extremely sketchy-seeming *other* app that seemed like a dev tool for testing apps that aren't finished yet. Then, through that system, you had to download this caucus app.

As I had mentioned, I worked retail selling cell phones for about four years total, including a lot of senior citizens. Getting them onto their Facebook was hard enough. But for The App, we had to have a guide telling Android owners how to enable developer options so that they could download this app-before-you-download-The App. And then, one day in February, they'd have to use this app all on their own in a room full of potentially angry people, and this would have an impact on who would be *the next president*.

Why did they have to download some other app as a platform to download The App? Because it wasn't finished yet. Not just in a way that it had a couple kinks to work out, it was blatantly, comically unfinished using it. Pressing the wrong button on nearly any screen would crash it. We weren't just buying some off-the-shelf app to use, or maybe tweak a little bit; this company was making The App at the exact same time as we were training people how they'd be using it.

We had an event for all our precinct chairs where we were supposed to debut The App for the first time, and get them all to download it, and then run mock caucuses using it. This was, without exaggeration, the worst day I've ever had at a job in my life. No one could figure out how to get it on their phones, let alone run a caucus with it. There was too little support for too many people who needed help, and the help they needed, none of the staff knew how to help with. This had

been *the* event we'd been building for, that we recruited all our best volunteers to all come to, and instead of teaching them how they'd run the caucus, we looked incompetent, understaffed, and scared.

It was at this point that the HQ staff could have seen that result, heard the feedback, and made the reasonable decision that The App was clearly not going to work. Instead, they just shrugged it off as something that would get better. The App is a work-in-progress, after all. (And we were just field organizers, what did we know?)

Then, February 3rd, 2020, the best possible thing for Nevada happened: [Iowa stepped on the rake before we could.](#) Maybe HQ staff could ignore their precinct chairs and the field organizers, but they couldn't ignore *that*.

Overnight, everything changed. The state party that had no money to pay us for cell phone reimbursements had someone who was clearly a crisis communications consultant telling us extremely obvious shit in a conference call the next morning. Our digital media person told us very specifically not only were we not to talk about anything related to The App on social media, we couldn't even "like" anything related to it, and they *would* be checking. (To see if they really would, I went and made my Twitter likes all drill tweets to see if anyone would notice. No one said anything.) While publicly, we were insisting that we had extremely real backup plans we were happy to use, in every video call with HQ it was obvious from the bags under their eyes that they had been working on coming up with a new plan instead of sleeping. The class separation of HQ from everyone else didn't just hurt us in the lower class, it put way too much of a burden on the class exclusively allowed to make decisions.

A whole new group of people arrived: in the same office park as the HQ, a dozen or so people from the DNC came to... I don't know what they did, exactly, but they were at their laptops and seemed very serious about it. All their food was catered for them.

Soon, we had a new plan: instead of The App, we now had a digital tool *WHICH IS NOT AN APP* on iPads to help precinct chairs report their results. The "tool" was a Google Form. We were told specifically not to tell anyone that it was a Google Form, but when one of my precinct chairs asked me straight up, "is this a Google Form?" I said... yeah. He responded, "oh, great! That's just how I would have set it up. Thanks!" It was honestly pretty easy to use. Even the smartphone-averse could fill out a form on one of the iPads we provided.

## Early Vote and the Caucus

Our job so far had focused not on the four-day early vote window, where people could "caucus" by filling out a form, but on the day-of caucus itself. When early vote came around, though, it was clear that everyone wanted to vote early instead of participate in another shitshow like 2016.

The field staff spent the day filling in at early vote sites that needed extra hands. At one library, I helped people cast their early vote ballots who had waited in line for five and a half hours.

The enormous volume of people who voted early meant that all the weight was taken off the day-of caucus, in terms of managing huge crowds of people. While we were working sixteen hours days during early vote, to get people through the lines, open and close sites, and then drive the ballots around, the caucus itself was smooth. I went to a small site with three precincts that only had one person there who wanted to be a precinct captain, so I ran one precinct as another one waited a bit over an hour for me to be done. They didn't seem upset at all; if anything, they were grateful that it was just a little waiting around, and that someone who knew the process was running it.

After driving the final caucus boxes back to HQ, I spent time with the caucus director doing my favorite task of the entire six months: puzzling through the "problem

precincts," the ones with results that didn't make any sense or that the precinct chair had clearly messed up. It was a fun bit of problem-solving, working through what it seemed like the precinct captain was trying to do, and essentially re-doing their work for them.

One thing I can say confidently is that I didn't see any anti-Bernie foul play from anyone on the campaign. Everyone at HQ was firmly in the establishment Democratic camp, to be sure (as will come up soon), but they were first and foremost about covering their own asses and not having another 2016-like disaster on their hands. They just wanted a caucus where the story about it afterward would be about who finished in what place, not what a mess it was.

Fortunately for everyone's asses being covered, the bottom-line result from the caucus was clear: Bernie won in a landslide, more than twice as many votes and delegates as runner-up Biden. Because it was such a blowout, none of the candidates were going to sue the party over this or that delegate being wrong.

For people following Bernie, you might remember this moment: probably the high point of morale for any reformist socialist or social democrat in the United States in many years. It's hard not to connect Bernie's impending doom with that other impending doom hanging over us at the end of February 2020.

## The Stench

After all the votes were cast, it was time to clean up. The email-sending squad from the DNC had all left, and no one had been in their office for a couple days. They had left all their trash, including uneaten food, such as an entire chicken carcass from one of their catered meals. The field staff wasn't allowed to be in the office nearby HQ, but we were required to go there to clean up after the more important people who were using it.

I was probably 20 feet from the door when our supervisor opened it and I got hit with a physical wave of

stench. A childhood full of sinus infections leave me with a weakened sense of smell, but this wasn't so much an odor as a steamroller, or a targeted command telling my body to retch.

## Leaving

It was early March 2020, and I was convinced I never wanted to work in electoral politics again. I wanted to be a union organizer. With plenty of postings at union-jobs.com, I thought it would be pretty easy to find a position, so I declined the bosses' invitations to stay on.

I ended up staying with my parents and collecting unemployment until I moved back to Seattle in 2021 instead.

## After I Left

You might have heard about [the entire staff of the party quitting](#), giving themselves a severance payment for doing so. If not, you should have, because I think it's rather instructive.

Basically, someone from DSA (and it's important to emphasize it was just "someone," not a democratically-decided-upon DSA project) won the leadership of the party, so the Dems, instead of handing over the infrastructure, torched it instead. The same party that didn't have the money to pay us handed over \$450k that they just had sitting around to Cortez Masto's fund.

State parties often run something called a "coordinated campaign": basically, it doesn't make sense to have entirely separate campaign structures for all these different Democrats in a state, so you'd have one campaign that would turn people out for all your candidates, whether they're Governor, Senator, Representative, etc. Makes sense. The NV Dems always ran this in off-cycle elections. In 2022, though, that power was [taken away from the state party, and given to Washoe County](#) (where Reno is, about seven hours north of Vegas). But, with no staff, how was Washoe County, of all places, going to run

this? By hiring a company of all the former NV Dems staff to do it, of course. (And I'd be surprised if they were unionized this time around, like they were before.)

Which leads me to some conclusions.

## Conclusion I: Taking over the Infrastructure of the Democratic Party will not Work

Don't try to take over the Democratic party like that, they'll never just hand it over to you. Some people might protest that Trump's bootlickers have successfully taken over local Republican parties from more establishment Republicans, but it's a totally different scenario: none of the Republican officials want to piss off Trump, whereas Democratic ones would gladly piss off Bernie just because they hate him. The Republican party basically gets taken over by a new upstart wing every decade, from Nixon to Reagan's hard-right to the neo-conservatives to Trump, but there's no similar history for the Democrats.

Establishment Democrats will not weigh the pros and cons of socialist organizers and reasonably conclude that while they disagree on some economic issues, at least they're on the same page about things like abortion rights and protecting LGBT people. They hate socialists with nearly the same passion that they hate Trump, and probably more than they hate pre-Trump conservatives. They will salt the earth and burn the infrastructure rather than hand it over to socialists.

## Conclusion II: Electoral-Campaign-by-Electoral-Campaign Union Organizing isn't a Long-Term Strategy

For those non-union-nerds out there, you might not realize how different the structure of SAG-AFTRA and the WGA are from other unions. I'm not an expert on them, but my basic understanding

is that you don't show up to a movie set non-union, and then organize it, go through the NLRB, and hope you get a contract before the movie finishes; people join the unions, which already have contracts with the studios covering the entire industry, and each production signs onto the existing union contracts. Then, those union members go to work for those productions that have agreed to the unions' rules. Movies don't use non-union labor because they'd get boycotted by all the other workers.

Campaign workers desperately need a similar system. Under the current (non-)system, only a minority of political campaigns are going to be unionized, and it'll be a hodgepodge of wildly different contracts and pay rates, each negotiated individually. No one is covered on day one of a new campaign; you have to spend half your time fighting for the union while trying to do your actual job simultaneously.

How I'd imagine it working is that CWG forms an alliance with traditional large unions, and makes a demand of the DNC and other big organizations that every Democratic or "progressive" political campaign in the country needs to only use union labor, or else [insert thing the unions could threaten the DNC with here, use your imagination]. They negotiate a sector-wide contract. Then, anyone who gets a job on a campaign has to join the union and is covered under the contract from day one.

It's not a perfect solution (and any anarchist reading this will certainly have reasonable objections about how top-down and not bottom-up it is), but as long as we're running electoral campaigns, I can't think of a better way to protect the workers.

## Conclusion III: Electoral Politics is a Massive Sink of Resources and is Rewiring our Brains

Just like as workers, we worked such long hours that we lost the ability to talk or think about